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THE VIET CONG SECURITY SERVICE

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THE VIET CONG SECURITY SERVICE

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FOREWORD

This study is the product of a joint effort of U.S. civilian and military organizations in Saigon and Washington. Based principally on captured documents and POW reports, much of the information contained herein is dated and may not reflect the most recent organizational and operational changes of the Vietnamese Communist security apparatus. Such changes will be dealt with in supplementary memoranda. Specialized and more detailed supplements are also in preparation.

Since the study is designed principally for use in the field, a maximum effort was made to employ standard translations of Viet Cong phraseology. Viet Cong place-names are used throughout (See attached map).

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MAP

South Vietnamese Government and Viet Cong Administrative Boundaries

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SUMMARY

The Allies in Vietnam face a large, well-organized, and highly professional Communist security apparatus. In its tasks of protecting the Viet Cong infrastructure from Allied intelligence penetrations and in maintaining security in Communist-held territory in South Vietnam, the apparatus, which is an organic part of the Ministry of Public Security (Bo Cong An) of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, is both efficient and ruthless. Possibly 15 - 20,000 strong, it operates in regions dominated by the Viet Cong, in contested areas, and in regions under South Vietnamese control.

Its functions in the government-controlled areas are the manifold ones of a Communist State Security Service operating both at home and abroad. They resemble those of the KGB in Soviet-occupied territory or of the Ministry of Public Security of the Democratic Republic of China as it operates in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Viet Cong security service (often called An Ninh) case officers are tasked with penetrating Allied security and intelligence organizations and in placing agents in South Vietnamese political parties and religious sects. A document captured in March 1967 indicates that clerks, cryptographers, radio operators, and workers at message centers at South Vietnamese military intelligence and police agencies are given top priority for recruitment as penetrations. An Ninh "Armed Reconnaissance" groups assassinate ("execute") or kidnap ("arrest") government police and intelligence officials, and conduct raids on Allied intelligence and security installations. Other agents in government territory draw up black lists of government officials to be executed in the event of a Viet Cong victory.

The role of the apparatus in areas dominated by the Viet Cong is principally defensive. It recruits large numbers of security agents and informants in Viet Cong villages and hamlets and investigates suspected Allied agents and "reactionaries." Its legal apparatus runs interrogation facilities and jails throughout the Viet Cong areas of South Vietnam. It executes suspects found guilty of cooperating with the Allies. Others are given prison sentences. The number of such executions each year in Viet Cong territory probably runs into the several thousands. Security Service jails incarcerate additional thousands.

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Experience is one of the Viet Cong Security Service's principal assets. Far older than the South Vietnamese police system, the Viet Cong service probably began in the early thirties, shortly after the creation of the Vietnamese Communist Party ("Workers" or Lao Dong Party) by Ho Chi Minh. Histories of the Party during World War II suggest that the service was active during the early forties. Its existence was not openly acknowledged, however, until 1946, when Ho Chi Minh announced the creation of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS). Numerous documents indicate that the security apparatus, under MPS control, was active throughout Vietnam during the struggle against the French.

After the Geneva Accords of 1954, the apparatus in the North became a typically pervasive -- but legal -- Communist police bureaucracy. In the South, with the accession of Diem to power in the spring of 1954, the security apparatus went deep underground. MPS-guided security officials continued to operate during Diem's early years, as part of the clandestine Communist apparatus.

The Ho Chi Minh Government, acknowledging to itself that it could not overthrow Diem by legal means, decided in 1959 that violence was the only course left open. Thus, in 1959 and 1960, the North Vietnamese government began sending substantial numbers of infiltrators South. Among the first were MPS security officials. To begin with, these officials came individually, or in small groups attached to larger groups of infiltrating personnel. In 1962, however, the Ministry apparently decided to systematize the infiltration of its personnel into the South and began training large groups of them at its security school in Ha Dong, just outside of Hanoi. The first seventy-man security group probably arrived in South Vietnam in mid-1963. Similar groups have been marching South ever since. It would be reasonable to estimate that the infiltration rate of MPS personnel into the South is at least 500 men a year. The rate may be considerably higher.

The significance of the infiltration of officials of the MPS is not in their quantity but in the positions they hold. Infiltrators man many of the top posts in the security apparatus throughout South Vietnam. The chief of the Security Section of the Central Office of South Vietnam

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(COSVN), for example, is believed to have come from the North. So have many chiefs of Security Sections in the lower echelons.

The organization of the security apparatus, although seemingly complex, is actually quite simple. Each echelon owes allegiance to two immediate masters: the security hierarchy of the next higher echelon, and the Current Affairs Committee of the party organization at its own level. Each echelon above district level also is subject to orders from the Ministry in Hanoi. The COSVN Security Section is subordinate both to the Current Affairs Committee of COSVN and to the Ministry of Public Security in Hanoi but may have its channel to a subordinate region by-passed by orders to the region from Hanoi. Located in War Zone "C," the COSVN Security Section is the highest security component in South Vietnam. It is also the largest. Totalling 500 men, the COSVN Security Section is divided into ten major subsections (codenamed B1 through B10). It runs a large counterintelligence/security school (B6) which graduates over 500 students a year. COSVN Security Section also has an espionage (or more accurately -- aggressive counterespionage) apparatus whose case officers operate both in South Vietnam and Cambodia. The COSVN Security Section's espionage component is closely connected to the Security Section of the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Zone (also called Region IV).

The security apparatus of Region IV, unique because of its proximity to the power mechanisms of the South Vietnamese government, is organized to accommodate its position. Although the Region IV Security Section has all the functions of an ordinary Viet Cong security apparatus, its espionage component is unusually large. The size of its espionage elements is almost certainly due to the abundance of targets in Saigon city.

Other regional Security Sections have a more normal configuration. Although there is relatively little direct documentation on regional Security Sections, available evidence implies the presence at region level of all the components found at province. (See below.) In addition to the provincial components, regional Security Sections run counterintelligence schools, which altogether probably give security and counterintelligence courses to thousands of students a year.

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The typical An Ninh provincial apparatus (which has a staff of about 100) is divided into four parts: an Administrative Subsection (B1), which handles routine correspondence; a Political Protection Subsection (B2), which runs internal security, Party security and counterintelligence operations; an Espionage Subsection (B3), which operates in government-controlled areas; and a Legal Affairs Subsection (B4), which runs Viet Cong interrogation facilities and jails. Officials from the Espionage Subsection ordinarily operate in the province capital, either on their own or in cooperation with the province capital's own Security Section.

The security apparatus at district level is much like that of the provinces, except that it is smaller. Averaging about twenty men, a District Security Section is divided, according to a COSVN directive, into three parts: an Administrative Subsection (B1); an Internal Counter-intelligence Subsection (B2), which operates in Viet Cong territory; and an Espionage Subsection (B3), which operates in areas controlled by the government -- particularly the district seat. A District Security Section closely supervises the activities of the Village and Hamlet Security machinery under its jurisdiction.

The size of Village Security Sections varies widely. A village service in an area long controlled by the Viet Cong can have as many as seven full-time security officials serving at village level, with additional permanent officials attached to the hamlets in its administrative jurisdiction. A village section in an area dominated by the government, however, may contain only one or two security functionaries. As a general rule, hamlets have no full-time security officials of their own. Security police serving at hamlet level are attached to villages.

Underlying the formal security machinery of the Viet Cong is a vast network of secret agents, secret associations, and informants. Theoretically, a Viet Cong hamlet is permeated with agents and individuals keeping watch on one another. One of the principle jobs of low-level security officials is to keep the networks strong and functioning and to confince the people, by constant propaganda, that secrecy is of paramount importance. The number of security indoctrination sessions given to people in Viet Cong territory almost certainly runs into the hundreds of thousands a year.

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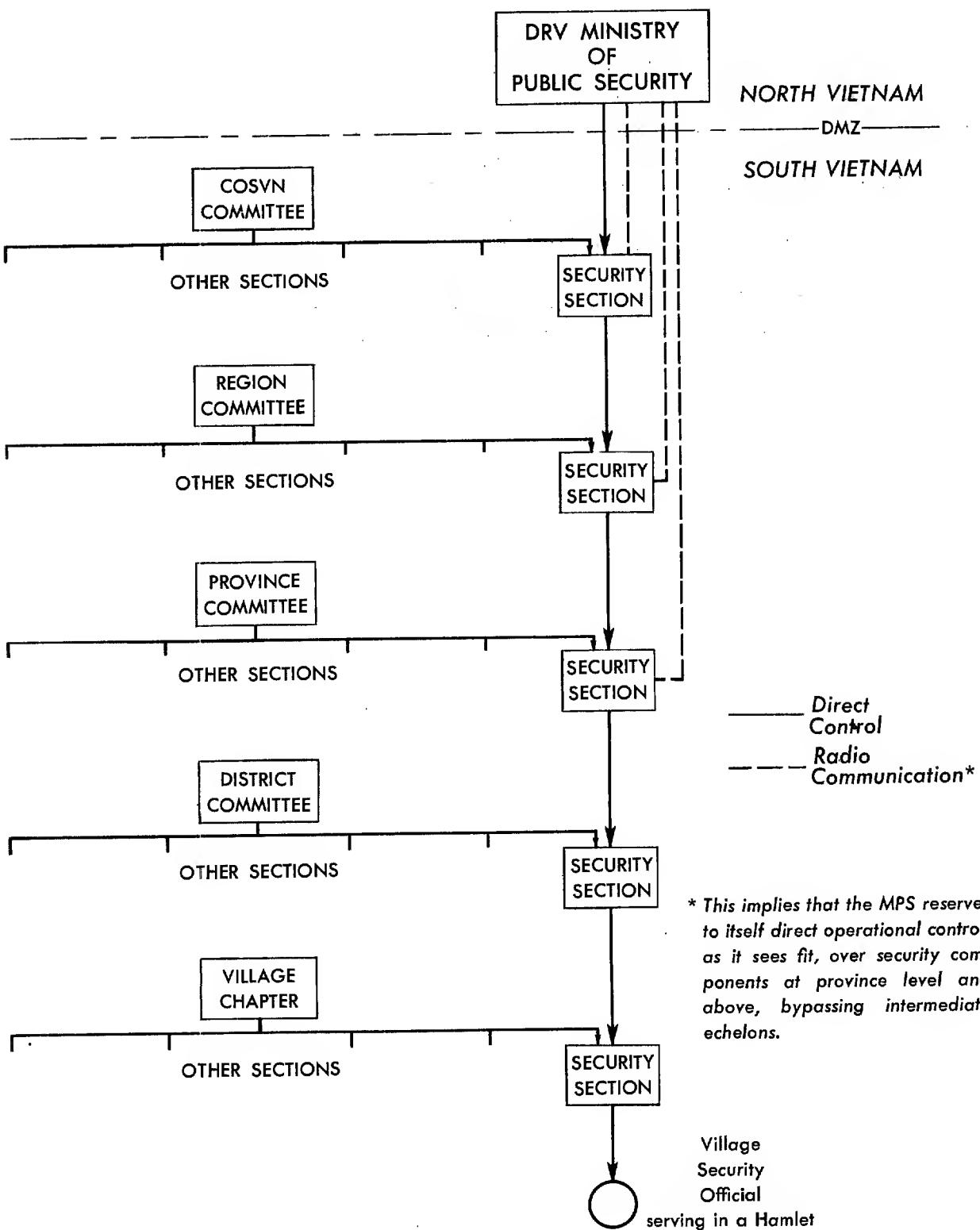
Although the Viet Cong security system is strong, it is not invulnerable. Military pressure, which has weakened the resolve of many adherents to the enemy cause, has also affected the spirit of a small but growing number of security officials. In 1966, for example, over a hundred security functionaries defected to the Allies. It is likely that an even larger number will defect in 1967. Such security defectors are usually low-level, but among them is a sprinkling of district and province officials. If Allied pressures mount, and Viet Cong fortunes correspondingly wane, the Communist security machinery will almost certainly experience further and more severe strains.

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VIET CONG
SECURITY SERVICE
CHAIN OF COMMAND

Chart 1

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. Background

1. The annals of the start of the Vietnamese Communist security apparatus lie in the archives of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in Hanoi. They are not available to U. S. intelligence.

2. It would be reasonable to conjecture, however, that the formal security service began coincidentally with, or slightly after, the creation of the Vietnamese Communist Party, constituted on 3 February 1930, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh.¹ It probably existed in rudimentary form even earlier.² Ho himself almost certainly received instruction about Communist Party security in the early 1930's in Moscow when he attended the Lenin School, an academy for foreign Party leaders.³ Among the Lenin School's instructors were officials of the Soviet State Security Service, presently called the "KGB," which, according to experienced U. S. intelligence officials, the Viet Cong security apparatus strongly resembles. Ho probably passed on some of the information he acquired on security matters to Vietnamese students he lectured in Moscow on Party organization.⁴

3. The practical necessity of a security component was impressed on Vietnamese Communists almost from the beginning. In the early Twenties, when Ho had a hand in forming the French Communist Party,⁵ "two security agents" apparently of the French Surete "dogged him like a shadow."⁶ In April 1931, barely a year after the Vietnamese Party's founding, the French Security Service succeeded in arresting almost the entire membership of the Party Central Committee, as well as a number of lower-level officials.⁷ Ho, who avoided the debacle, was himself arrested and held briefly in Hong Kong in June 1931.⁸ The early success of the French Surete may have inadvertently succeeded in imbuing the Vietnamese Communists with their penchant for secrecy.

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4. By its own account, the Party recovered within a year from the blows dealt by the French security service. Its fortunes and its security improved throughout the 1930's, and during World War II, despite internecine Party struggles. References to "suppression of traitors" and "elimination of spies" in a Party history of these periods strongly suggest that a Party security apparatus existed and was at work.¹⁰

5. After Japan's surrender in World War II, Ho Chi Minh proclaimed Vietnam's "independence" and, on 2 September 1945, announced the creation of the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam."¹¹ Four months later he created the Ministry of Public Security (Bo Cong An), which then directed and now directs the Vietnamese Communist security apparatus north and south of the seventeenth parallel. The functions of the MPS in the Vietnamese struggle against the French (1945-1954) were the same as they are now. They include the maintenance of internal security and public order in Communist territory, active counter-espionage, armed raids, and the kidnapping of enemy intelligence and security officials.

6. After the Communist victory at Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Accords in 1954, the MPS in the north took on many of the trappings and tasks of a pervasive Communist police bureaucracy. The chief of the MPS, Tran Quoc Hoan, moved into the old headquarters of the French Surete in Hanoi proper, set up a training school for MPS officers at Ha Dong City (a few miles southwest of Hanoi), and consolidated subordinate MPS offices in each region, province, district, and village in the north.

7. In South Vietnam, the apparatus, many of whose officials had regrouped to the north, submerged into the cities and countryside. It did not begin to reassert fully its previous authority until 1959 or 1960, when the Ho Chi Minh regime decided to topple the South Vietnamese Government by force and sent the first MPS-trained infiltrators to the south.

8. Infiltration of MPS personnel continues. As Tran Ouoc Hoan declared in the autumn of 1960, "The struggle against counter-revolutionaries is a great and heavy revolutionary task for the entire Party and people."¹² To see that the task is done, Hoan oversees the large MPS bureaucracy and encourages, as best he can, those he sends to carry

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on the counter-revolutionary struggle in the south. He (or one of his deputies) addresses each MPS infiltration class as it convenes at Ha Dong and again as it graduates, before the infiltrators begin their long trek to South Vietnam.¹³

II. Infiltration

Summary

9. Security personnel from the MPS have been infiltrating into South Vietnam from the North since at least 1960. At first the infiltrators came individually or in small groups, attached to larger infiltration groups of civilian and political cadres. In late 1962, the decision was apparently made to systematize the infiltration of security agents, and the Ministry of Public Security School at Ha Dong began training infiltration classes. Infiltration groups of Ha Dong graduates probably started arriving in South Vietnam in mid- or late 1963. The rate of infiltration probably reached at least 500 a year. The quantity of infiltrators is less important, however, than their quality, which is high, since almost all are cadres rather than rank-and-file. On their arrival in South Vietnam, the security infiltrators join the Security Sections of the Party bureaucracy from COSVN down to district levels. They are far more prevalent in the northern half of South Vietnam than in the southern.

Early History

10. The Politburo of North Vietnam decided in the spring of 1959 to increase substantially its efforts to overthrow the Diem Regime in the south. The decision was agreed to by the Party's Central Committee later in the year and was rubber stamped by the Third Party Congress which met in September 1960. One of the consequences of the decision was the dispatch of security personnel into South Vietnam. The first security officials of which we have evidence infiltrated south in 1960.¹⁴ One of these was assigned to a post in Ninh Thuan Province. Another, who arrived in Ninh Thuan in April 1961, became the deputy chief of the Province Security Section.¹⁵ There is evidence of security infiltrators also turning up in Binh Dinh in 1962.¹⁶ Presumably, the phenomenon was nationwide rather than peculiar to Ninh Thuan and Binh Dinh.

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The Decision to Send Groups

11. In 1962, the Ministry of Public Security apparently decided to systematize the infiltration of its personnel into the south. In the latter part of the year its school at Ha Dong geared up to teach infiltration groups in classes. A security official's Personal History Statement, picked up in 1966, indicated that in November 1962 he had "been trusted by Headquarters to organize the cadre training course /in Ha Dong/" for infiltrates into South Vietnam.¹⁷ According to another source, a class of some 70 "regroupees" (that is, Southern Viet Minh who had "regrouped" North in 1954 and 1955) started their infiltration training at Ha Dong at the end of the year. It is likely that this class infiltrated some time around the middle of 1963.¹⁸

12. Two other classes started in early 1963. One, composed of a hundred southerners, started its infiltration on 7 September 1963.¹⁹ These infiltrators were mostly stationed in the northern part of South Vietnam in such provinces as Quang Nam and Darlac. Another group, also a hundred strong, composed of both northerners and southerners, did not begin infiltration until 27 January 1964. Its code number was "K3."²⁰

13. Information is spotty on the infiltration of Ha Dong trainees thereafter. We have evidence, however, that three such groups left North Vietnam in the spring or early summer of 1965. One infiltration group, codenamed "B46," left North Vietnam on 1 May; the group had 70 infiltrators.²¹ This group was apparently assigned to various posts in the northern part of the country. A second group, codenamed "K48," began its infiltration two weeks later; this group marched to War Zone C. Some of its members were assigned to security sections in the Saigon area.²² A third infiltration group, codenamed "K49," was spotted in War Zone C in August, probably having left the north sometime in the late spring or early summer of the year.²³ "K49's" size, unknown, was probably at least 50 men.

14. An analysis of available evidence concerning infiltration does not indicate the rate at which security officials are entering South Vietnam. Since 300-odd infiltrators started south in the spring of 1965

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alone, however, it is reasonable to assume that there are at least 500 security infiltrators a year.²⁴ The rate may be considerably higher.

Quality

15. The number of infiltrators is not nearly as important as their quality, which is very high. One source indicated that his 180-man infiltration group was composed entirely of cadres, with ranks ranging from Senior Sergeant to Major.²⁵ Another source indicated that his 70-man infiltration group contained one Major, two Captains, six Lieutenants, four aspirant Lieutenants, and ten Senior Sergeants, all of whom were police or Public Security cadres.²⁶

16. Infiltrators form a large part of the leadership of the Communist Security apparatus in South Vietnam, holding down such positions as chief or deputy chief of security sections at various echelons.²⁷ They also include such key cadres as interrogators, communications personnel, prison camp officials, and espionage case officers. The pattern of infiltration for security officials has so far paralleled that of military units. Northerners are seldom, if ever, found in the provinces of the Mekong Delta,²⁸ while they are frequently assigned to Security Sections in the northern half of the country. As early as November, 1965, for example, there were at least five northerners attached to a single District Security Section in Thua Thien Province.²⁹

17. Although infiltrators hold many high positions, they make up only a relatively small percentage of the overall Viet Cong security apparatus in South Vietnam.

III. Numbers

18. No direct evidence is available on the overall size of the Viet Cong security service. A reasonable estimate can be derived, however, by extrapolating from captured strength reports of Security Sections of the various echelons and from Tables of Organization (TO&E) which indicate the numbers the Communists are striving for.

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We believe the number of full-time security officials in Viet Cong territory in early 1966 (the date of most relevant documents) was in the neighborhood of from fifteen to twenty thousand.

19. The estimate was arrived at by adding together estimated strengths for the security service personnel serving at COSVN, region, province, district, village and hamlet levels. The estimated number of security personnel at each level is as follows:

COSVN	500
Region	1,500
Province	3,500
District	4,600
Village & Hamlet	<u>5,000 - 10,000</u>
TOTAL	15,100 - 20,100

20. The evidence to support a figure of about 500 at COSVN in early 1966 is voluminous.³⁰ The section may now be slightly larger.

21. Relatively little information is available on the strengths of Regional Security Sections as of early 1966. Large numbers of documents indicate that such sections were extremely active, however, and that they contain all the components of a Province Security Section. They have, in addition, permanent components which provinces lack, such as internal counterintelligence schools.³¹ Furthermore, they maintain large -- perhaps company size -- armed reconnaissance units. Thus a Region Security Section is probably considerably larger than a province section (which averages about 100 men), but smaller than COSVN's. A reasonable estimate might put the average strength of a region section at 250. The overall regional strength of 1,500 was arrived at by multiplying 250 times six, the number of Viet Cong regions in early 1966.

22. Better evidence is available on the size of Provincial Security Sections. A Region III Table of Organization suggested a standard security complement for provinces in its jurisdiction of around 135.³² Region III's Can Tho Province, with 133 security officials, came close to the desired total,³³ while Rach Gia Province, with 120 officials, still had a good way to go.³⁴ Some Provincial Security Sections appear

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to be considerably smaller (e.g., Ba Ria Province, with 37),³⁵ while others are probably far larger. No strength figures are available on the size of the Binh Dinh Province Security Section, for example, but a captured activity report strongly implies that in early 1966, the size of the section was in the hundreds.³⁶ Recent documents suggest that special efforts have been made to increase the strengths of Provincial Security Sections,³⁷ so an estimate of one hundred as an average strength of a province section seems realistic, if slightly conservative. The overall provincial strength of 3,500 was arrived at by multiplying 100 by 35, the number of Viet Cong provinces in early 1966.

23. A COSVN table of organization for District Security Sections calls for a strength of from forty to forty-three officials.³⁸ Captured documents indicate, however, that this ideal is seldom realized. Although one district in Binh Dinh Province, with 50 officials in late 1965, actually exceeded the TO&E strength, reports for four other districts show an average size of about twenty,⁴⁰ the figure used to compute the overall numbers of security personnel serving at district levels. To reach the district total of 4,600, 20 was multiplied by 230, the approximate number of VC districts in South Vietnam.

24. The overall size of the apparatus at village and hamlet levels is much more difficult to gauge, not only because of the enormous variations between villages and hamlets (some have no security officials at all), but because of the propensity of low-level Viet Cong functionaries to wear more than one hat. Nonetheless, enough information is available to allow for a broad approximation.

25. There are two ways to approach the problem: by looking at overall figures in one region (and extrapolating from them), or by determining an average strength at village and hamlet and multiplying by an estimate of the number of villages and hamlets in which the Viet Cong have a security apparatus organized. Neither approach pretends to be exact.

26. The first approach employs a document captured in the lower Delta. A Region III report of December, 1965, indicated there were then

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1,134 village-level security "cadre" serving in its jurisdiction. Whether or not 1,134 represented total number of security personnel in Region III depends on the translation of the word "cadre." If, in the translation, Viet Cong usage was followed, and "cadre" means "officer" (equivalent to assistant squad leader and up), the Region III report omitted the rank-and-file. Were this the case, and one assumes that there are about as many rank-and-file (clerks and guards, for example) as officers, then the overall number of security personnel in the region was something over 2,000. Extrapolations from the 2,000 figure throughout the rest of Vietnam (taking into account population control figures) would bring a countrywide total of around 10,000. If, on the other hand, "cadre" here means "member" (U.S. and Vietnamese officials are prone to attach the word "cadre" to everybody), then extrapolations from the 1,134 figure would result in a countrywide total of about 5,000.

27. Or one can approach the problem by seeking a village average. Available documents indicate that in the normal village in which the Viet Cong have organized a Security Section, there are about three security officials,⁴² and that additional personnel -- administratively assigned to the villages -- serve in the hamlets. If one assumes that the Viet Cong have a three-man security apparatus in about half the 2,700 villages in South Vietnam and have at least one official in a quarter of Vietnam's 14,000 hamlets -- an assumption broadly supported by documents -- one arrives at a countrywide total of 7,550, a figure about midway between 5,000 and 10,000.

IV. Effectiveness

28. The efficiency of the Viet Cong Security Service, although generally high, varies with its tasks. So far it has been remarkably effective in keeping Allied penetrations of the Viet Cong infrastructure to a minimum. The reasons for its success in this task have been at least threefold. First, its counterespionage operations in government-controlled areas, which have penetrated large numbers of Allied (particularly Vietnamese) security and intelligence organizations, have been able to provide the Viet Cong with volumes of detailed information on Allied intelligence plans and activities. Second, the service's extensive networks of agents and informants in Viet Cong territory have frequently spotted Allied intelligence operatives before they can do the

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Viet Cong substantial damage. And third, the reputation of the service for efficiency and ruthlessness is such that many people who might otherwise become Allied agents decline to do so for fear of retaliation.

29. The Communist Security Service has been far less successful in the matter of population control. Despite its best efforts, almost two million people have fled Viet Cong territory in the last two years. The amount of intelligence loss from refugees -- were they properly exploited by the Allies -- could be incalculable. Second, the apparatus has been unable to prevent the defection to the Allies of additional thousands of Viet Cong officials and soldiers, many of whom have turned out to be gold mines of information to the Allies. And, third, Viet Cong Security Sections in many areas, both VC and contested, have still not solved the increasing problem of desertion. Communist security officials in Allied hands acknowledge that there are large numbers of ex-Viet Cong soldiers in VC territory, whom they have been unable to detect or persuade to return to the ranks.

30. The Security Service itself is by no means invulnerable. Of a sample of some 6,300 defectors who rallied in 1965 and 1966, about 35 were identified as security officials.⁴³ This would suggest that over a hundred such officials defected during 1966 (since there were about 20,000 defections), and that the number should be considerably higher in 1967. Although most security defectors have been low-level, some have served in District or Province Security Sections. Having been imbued by the Viet Cong security apparatus with the idea that the best way to survive is to repent, Communist security officials are usually extremely cooperative after turning themselves over to the Allies.

31. Another vulnerability of the apparatus appears on the reverse side of the coin of its fearsome reputation. It is usually disliked.⁴⁴ Several ex-Viet Cong have indicated that it is by far the most unpopular of Communist civilian agencies, and that individual security officials are sometimes regarded with a mixture of fear and hatred -- particularly by those who have lost relatives to Viet Cong justice.

V. Other Viet Cong Security and Intelligence Organizations

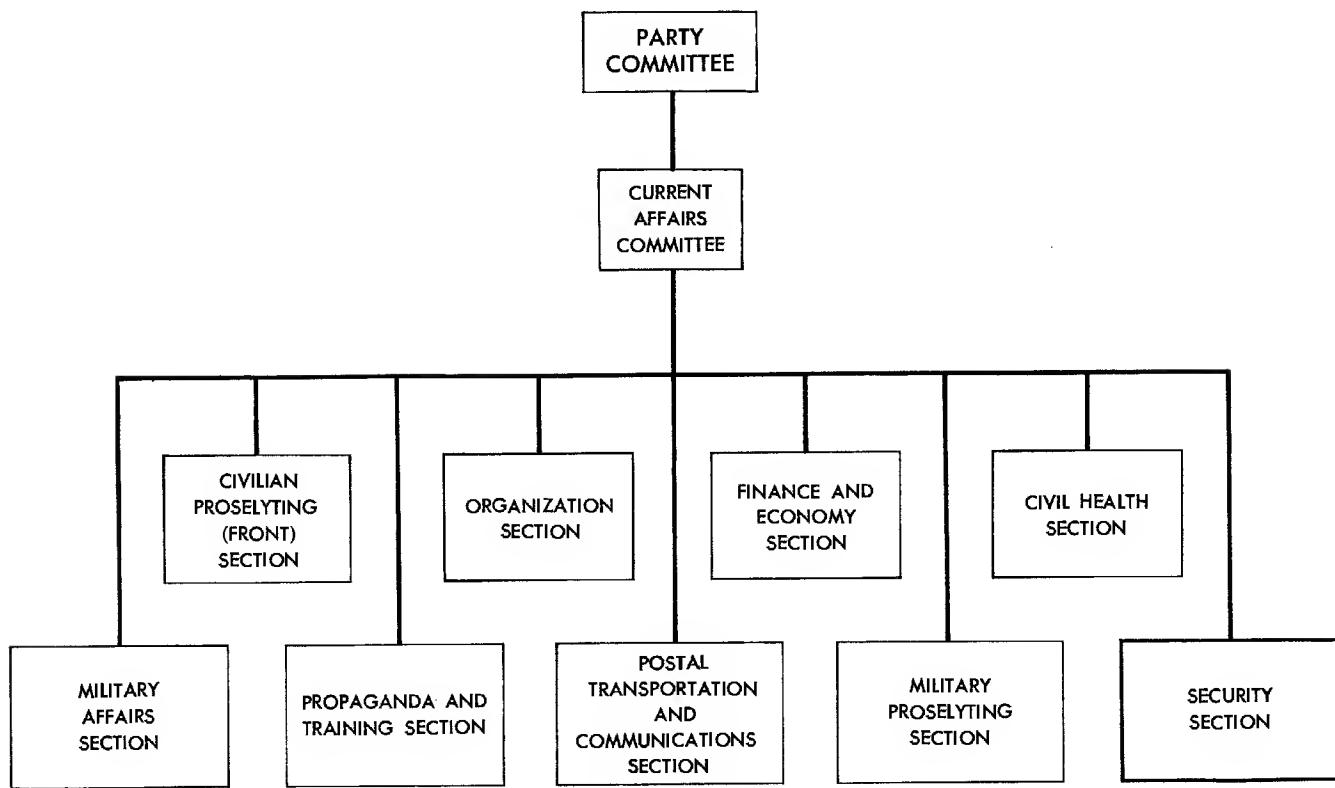
32. The Viet Cong Security Service is only one of several Communist intelligence organs operating in South Vietnam. They should not be confused. The others are briefly described below:

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A TYPICAL VIET CONG ORGANIZATION

Chart 2



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a. The Central Research Directorate (Cuc Ngieng Cuu, once called the Cuc Tinh Bao) is the North Vietnamese strategic military espionage apparatus, subordinate to the Ministry of Defense. It differs from the Viet Cong Security Service in two respects. First, its penetration operations, usually high-level, are aimed at gathering positive intelligence on Allied political and military plans and activities. (The Viet Cong Security Service's espionage components, on the other hand, are principally directed at gathering counterintelligence information.) Second, those operations visible to Allied intelligence so far appear to be singleton agents or compartmented nets, run directly from Hanoi. (This contrasts with the Viet Cong Security Service, whose sections are intertwined with the Party organization at the various echelons in South Vietnam.)

b. The Viet Cong Military Intelligence Service, which is subordinate to the military staff of the Military Affairs Section⁴⁵ of the Party apparatus, is responsible for gathering positive information on Allied military plans, organizations, and activities, in direct support of tactical operations. Its agents are most frequently low-level penetrations which supplement reconnaissance.

c. The Viet Cong Military Security apparatus is subordinate to the political staff of the Military Affairs Section of the Communist organization at the various echelons in South Vietnam.⁴⁶ Many of its tasks are similar to those of the Viet Cong Security Service, except that its targets and the organizations it protects are primarily military. It coordinates its activities with the Viet Cong Security Service. A Viet Cong region-level document dated 17 May 1966 indicated that "the coordination consists of exchange of plans of activities, experiences, regular and special reports, specialized training, documents captured from Allied Forces, information on espionage activities of Allied Forces, and recommendations to settle problems of both military and political nature, indoctrination of civilians and enlisted men in the maintenance of security, (and) combined security activities in base areas. . . ."⁴⁷

d. The Military Proselyting Sections of the Communist apparatus from COSVN to village levels are responsible for undermining the will of Allied forces in Vietnam, and for persuading Allied soldiers to desert or defect.⁴⁸ Because the military proselyters are frequently in touch with Allied (particularly South Vietnamese) soldiers, they often become

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privy to intelligence information, which they presumably forward, through Party channels, to Viet Cong military intelligence units. Like the Viet Cong Security Sections, Military Proselyting Sections run prisons. Their prisons, however, are strictly military. Viet Cong Security Service jails are for Allied intelligence and internal security personnel (both civilian and military), for suspected Allied agents, and for political prisoners.

33. Although, as indicated, the Communists have at least five elements concerned with intelligence, counterintelligence, or internal security, it should not be assumed that their chain of command is unclear or that important intelligence information is lost in the shuffle of competing bureaucracies. On the contrary, command lines are direct, functions are clearly delineated, and the flow of information is closely controlled.

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CHAPTER II

THE SECURITY SECTION OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF SOUTH VIETNAM (COSVN)

I. Background

1. The Ho Chi Minh government created COSVN in late 1960, or early 1961, following the decision in Hanoi to increase its efforts to overthrow the Diem regime in South Vietnam. Designed to serve as Hanoi's advance headquarters in the south, COSVN took over much of the equipment and many of the personnel of Nam Bo, then the largest command entity below the 17th parallel.⁴⁹ Among the elements COSVN probably inherited from Nam Bo was its Security Section, which had existed in one form or another since 1946, if not earlier.⁵⁰

2. The COSVN Security Section, although subordinate to the COSVN hierarchy, is ultimately responsible to the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in Hanoi, which supplies the section with many of its members. The Section's chief in 1965 was identified as a former deputy head of the MPS,⁵¹ and MPS infiltrators have been reported entering the COSVN area, some of whom presumably join the Section's staff.⁵² Certain COSVN Security Section directives are sent to the MPS in Hanoi for review.⁵³

3. In recent years, the Section has grown considerably. A knowledgeable Viet Cong prisoner stated that it had 150 members in late 1962, of whom 70 were office personnel.⁵⁴ By 1964 it had increased to 250,⁵⁵ and in November 1965 had reached a strength of 481,⁵⁶ with a planned strength in 1966 of 602.⁵⁷ The quality and political reliability of its members is undoubtedly high. In June 1965, when the Section's strength was 362, two-hundred and five (or 56%) were Party members, and 91 (or 25%) belonged to the Party Youth Group.⁵⁸ These percentages, as a ratio of Party affiliation, are uncommonly high for any level.

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4. The COSVN Security Section has a number of cover designations, among them C93 (an early one), or, in mid-1966, C289. It is also occasionally called ANR (i.e., The An Ninh of "R", which is the cover designator of COSVN). Its letter box number in 1966 was 1418B.

II. Functions

5. The COSVN Security Section has at least five major functions. First, it provides guidance and gives general direction to Security Sections from region to hamlet level in South Vietnam. Second, it keeps the COSVN hierarchy informed of security and counterintelligence matters throughout the country, by periodic and ad hoc reporting. Third, it provides internal security for COSVN and subordinate agencies in War Zone "C." Fourth, it trains large numbers of security cadres serving at district level and above in the south. Finally, it runs counterintelligence and espionage operations of its own, both in government-controlled areas of South Vietnam and in Cambodia.

Direction to Lower Levels

6. The security directive is the most straightforward means the COSVN Security Section employs to guide the lower echelons of the apparatus. The Section's annual "emulation" report for 1965 indicated it had used this device on 208 occasions during the year.⁵⁹ Although some captured An Ninh directives appear to have been issued under a COSVN Current Affairs Committee letterhead (and others, ascribed to COSVN, may have been composed in Hanoi), the examples taken by Allied units in various parts of South Vietnam illustrate the types of activity over which the Section exercises at least nominal control. These captured documents include:

a. A "secret" directive issued in late 1964 detailing the organization of espionage subsections to be set up by the An Ninh apparatus in government-held cities.⁶⁰

b. A circular, promulgated to province levels in 1965, stating that the South Vietnamese police were about to be equipped with crypto machines, and directing province security personnel to take steps to acquire related "crypto material."⁶¹

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c. A 1965 directive ordering "underground agents, secret agents and counterintelligence agents" to investigate the reintroduction of North Vietnamese refugees by the GVN into North Vietnam to carry out "sabotage and/or subversive activities." (The directive's recipients were asked to obtain rosters of the infiltrators, training programs, and dates and times of their infiltration into North Vietnam.)⁶²

d. A fourteen page "top secret" decree distributed in 1966 down to district levels, concerning the policies, missions, and modus operandi of counterespionage operations.⁶³

e. A nine page "top secret" directive issued in the summer of 1966 ordering a reorganization of District and Village Security Sections.⁶⁴

f. A memorandum distributed to regions in 1965 concerning special steps to be taken for the reinforcement of security measures along commo-liaison corridors.⁶⁵

g. A memorandum promulgated to region levels dictating Viet Cong policies towards foreign newsmen.⁶⁶

h. A circular concerning Allied commando activities in Viet Cong base areas.⁶⁷

i. A circular issued to regions in late 1966 warning of an increase of U. S. espionage activities "to facilitate the conduct of Allied operations in VC base areas."⁶⁸

7. The dispatch of inspection teams to lower echelons is a second control device used by the COSVN Security Section. During 1965, for example, at least eight such teams were sent to various areas in South Vietnam "to enable the cadres (in local areas) to evaluate the real situation."⁶⁹ One of the teams appears to have been sent to Viet Cong Region VI,⁷⁰ while a province report of 1966 indicates that a COSVN Security Section representative sat in on a provincial security meeting.⁷¹

8. A third device the COSVN Security Section uses to supervise lower levels is the calling to COSVN of various subordinate personnel, either individually or in groups, in order to explain and elaborate to them

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COSVN policies. Although hard evidence is lacking of a COSVN security conference having been held, there is little reason to believe that the security apparatus behaves differently in this respect from other elements of Vietnamese Communist officialdom. "Public Security" conventions have been noted in North Vietnam and in the provinces in the south,⁷² while other COSVN agencies have held national convocations or have entertained lower-level "delegates."⁷³ The presence of regional security personnel at COSVN has frequently been noted in security documents;⁷⁴ some probably were receiving instructions or explanations of Viet Cong policy.

9. One key question remains concerning COSVN direction to lower echelons: its detail. General directives have been picked up in various sections of the country (see above), but none has been specific as to area or course of action. None has been identified, for example, as directing Security Section A to assassinate GVN official B, or to arrest suspect C. Whether COSVN has files enabling it to issue such orders on a regular basis is not known.

Information to Higher Levels

10. A captured COSVN Security Section report indicates that its steering committee directs subsections to prepare "recurring and non-recurring reports" on the enemy and friendly situations, to pull together "studies," and to maintain "statistics, data, and other assessments of the situation."⁷⁵ The document does not indicate where the reports and assessments go, but copies are probably sent to the COSVN Current Affairs Committee. Certain documents are also forwarded to the Ministry of Public Security in Hanoi.⁷⁶

11. If the situation reports resemble those submitted from provinces to regions,⁷⁷ as seems likely, they would include assessments of Allied intelligence operations, where intelligence threats are likely to develop, and what is being done to meet them. Elaborate sets of statistics are also probably included. Among them would be the number of political unreliables suspected in Viet Cong territory,⁷⁸ a tally of suspects arrested, their disposition (how many jailed, how many executed), the number of GVN officials assassinated or kidnapped by security personnel, and a reckoning of deserters and defectors from

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Viet Cong military and political organizations during the reporting period.⁷⁹ Reports would probably include strength figures of VC security organizations at lower echelons.

Internal Security at COSVN

12. The protection of "The Party, agencies, base and corridors within the area of COSVN" is another of the principal missions of its Security Section.⁸⁰ Primarily, the mission is political, with the Security Section assuming the role of the special branch policeman rather than soldier. Much of the Section's internal police work is routine. It coordinates with other COSVN agencies on the issuance and use of local movement passes and gate permits,⁸¹ and issues instructions concerning the censorship of personnel mail "to detect anti-revolutionary thoughts or loss of morale...and coded intelligence reports in the form of personnel letters."⁸² The Section also holds security indoctrination classes for other COSVN agencies, cooperates with them in preventing desertions, investigates the "many suspicious cases" that apparently arise in the COSVN area and maintains files on "counter-revolutionary persons."⁸³ Those suspects whom the Section arrests it holds in its own detention facility for "interrogation and re-education." (The local suspects share the facility with higher-level detainees, including occasional Americans.)

13. The Security Section is only one of COSVN's protectors. There are others, with which it keeps in close contact. These include:

a. The security subsections of other COSVN agencies (for example, the security subsection of COSVN's Finance and Economy Section). A COSVN Security Section document indicated that "all /COSVN/ party civil agencies" had organized security guard sections by the end of 1965, and that COSVN Security Section coordinated with the other agencies security subsections on "internal political" matters.⁸⁴

b. The Security Sections of nearby provinces and districts. The COSVN Security Section regularly exchanges information with the provinces of Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, Binh Long, and with the districts of northern Tay Ninh Province,⁸⁵ the site of War Zone "C." The Section's directives have been captured among material belonging to the Tay Ninh Security

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Section,⁸⁶ and vice versa.⁸⁷ (Tay Ninh and Binh Long also occasionally draw weapons from the COSVN Security Section's armory.⁸⁸)

c. The 70th Guard Regiment. The 70th Regiment is the Main Force unit assigned to protect COSVN militarily. Its subordinates occasionally act on tactical information provided by the Security Section's armed reconnaissance teams.

d. The "Physical Security Section" of COSVN. The "Physical Security Section," formed in the summer of 1966, is a quasi-military unit to which other agencies of COSVN (including the 70th Regiment) supply personnel. Its functions include the development of guerrilla units and reconnaissance units within War Zone "C," the supervision of local relations with Cambodia "in case evacuation is dictated by the tactical situation," and the protection of foreign visitors -- a function it apparently took over from the COSVN Security Section.⁸⁹ Documents indicate it is closely associated with both the 70th Regiment and the COSVN Security Section.⁹⁰

Security Training

14. Training is one of the most important functions of the COSVN Security Section. Its security school provides instruction in security and counterespionage techniques to pupils serving at district level and above. The number of students the school graduates is probably at least five hundred a year. (A year-end report of 1965 claims that the school trained "over 700 cadres" in security matters during the first nine months of the year.) Another report suggests a somewhat smaller total.⁹¹

15. The school's students, although occasionally of the rank-and-file, usually serve, or are intended to serve, at command levels. The chief of My Tho Province's Security Section probably attended the school,⁹² for example, as have security executives at COSVN and region levels.⁹³ The higher-level positions in District Security Sections (particularly in the southern portion of South Vietnam) are filled with the school's alumni. In a district in the Delta, five of the top thirteen security cadres had attended the COSVN school. The district's COSVN graduates included the district security chief, his two deputies, the leading espionage cadre, and an "intelligence cadre."⁹⁴ All were Party members.

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16. The COSVN school gives a variety of courses, most of them four months long. The number of trainees in each varies from approximately twenty to almost one-hundred and fifty.⁹⁵ On the average, there are close to two hundred students at the school at any given time. The subjects of instruction vary. At least one course a year (and probably more) is given in basic espionage techniques.⁹⁶ Other courses have been referred to as "intelligence," "legal affairs," "security training," "border defense techniques," and "bodyguard."⁹⁷ The "legal affairs" course probably includes instruction in interrogation, in running jails, and in basic police methods. The "border defense" course, seemingly anomalous, appears to be a reflection of the fact that the security apparatus in the south is run by the MPS in Hanoi, whose school in Ha Dong also gives instruction on the tactics of border defense to its Armed Public Security elements.

Espionage and Counterespionage

17. Relatively little information is available on the espionage operations of the COSVN Security Section. It is clear, nonetheless, that the Section's case officers are active within South Vietnam and without.⁹⁸ Most of the external activity is probably in Cambodia,⁹⁹ whither from time to time COSVN has removed for physical safety.

18. Because of its location -- in the remote forests of northern Tay Ninh Province, away from heavily populated areas -- the section is probably far less active in domestic espionage operations than security components closer to cities -- such as the Security Section of Region IV, also called the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Zone (See Chapter III.). The COSVN Section's in-country espionage operations are probably small and specialized, geared to high-level penetrations. It seems likely that some agents employed by the Security Section's espionage element communicate with the Section by radio.¹⁰⁰

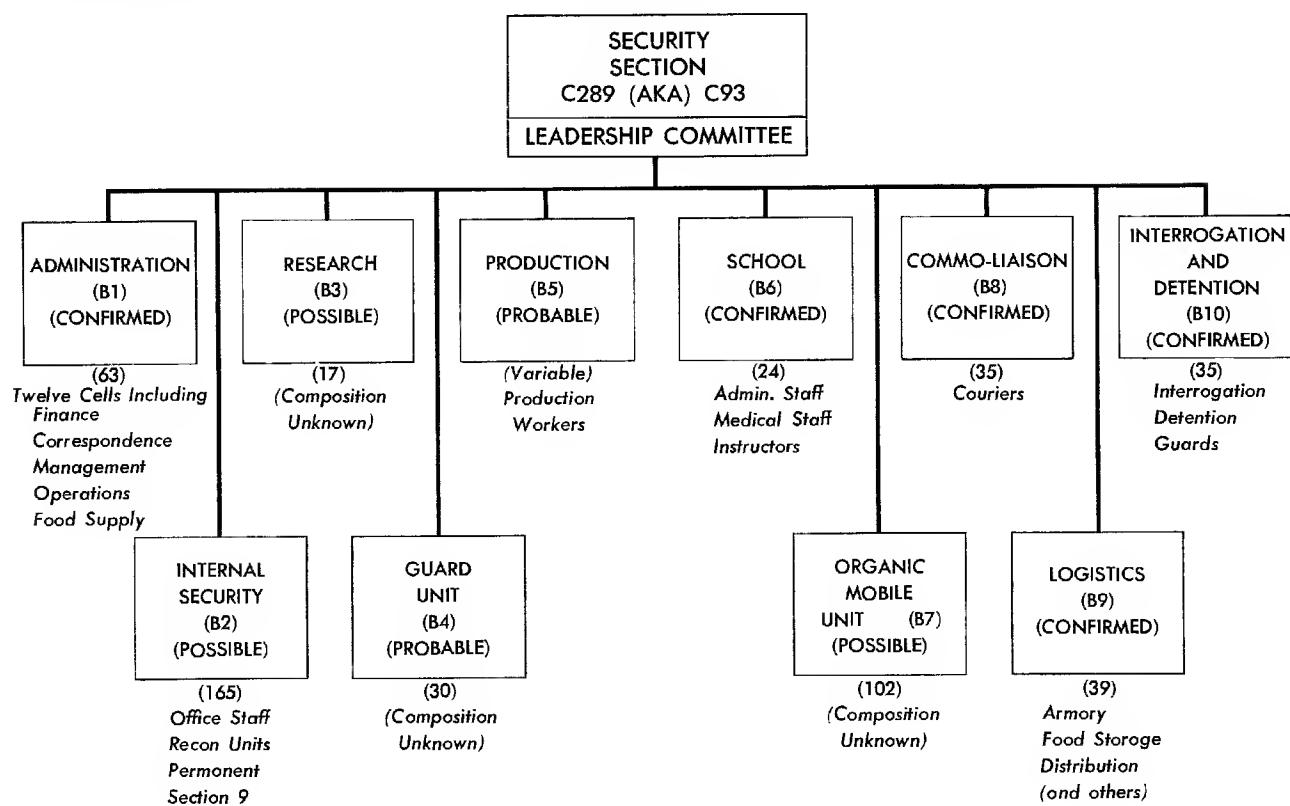
19. Very little is known about the Section's operations in Cambodia, other than their existence. It is known, for example, that the COSVN Finance and Economy Section advances the finance office of the Security Section sums of Cambodian riel on a quarterly basis, to be used for "confidential" purposes.¹⁰¹ (The "confidential" riel are accounted for separately from those used for routine purchases of

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Chart 3

THE SECURITY SECTION OF COSVN



Components Unidentified as to Subordination:

Espionage Component
Signal Component (s)
Crypto Component (s)
Provisional Guerrilla Unit (cover designation: "Village 5")

Possible Component:

Signal Intercept and Cryptanalysis Element

() = last known strength

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Cambodian food and supplies.) The Security Section finance office thereafter issues the "confidential" riel to security officers as needed.¹⁰²

20. The primary targets of the COSVN Security Section's espionage operations are probably Allied intelligence and internal security organizations: among them, MACV J-2, CIA, and the various police and intelligence collection organs of the South Vietnamese government.¹⁰³

III. Organization (See Chart)

21. The COSVN Security Section, run by a "Leadership" Committee, has ten major subsections (codenamed (B1 through B10),¹⁰⁴ each of which has a number of subordinate cells. Most of the subsections are clearly identified through captured documents, some are not. Also known to exist within the security organization are components whose subordination is unclear.. (We know, for example, there is a domestic espionage component. Which subsection it belongs to is uncertain.)

22. The Leadership Committee (also translated as "Command" or "Steering" Committee) is composed of a chief, at least one permanent deputy, and a number of representatives from the subsections. The Committee makes the Section's major policy decisions, oversees the more important operational activities of its subordinates, and supervises in detail the financial and personnel transactions of the subsections. Most of the major decision-making is done by one man, the chief of the Committee.

23. A high-level defector has indicated that the head of the Leadership Committee in 1965 was a Lieutenant Colonel "Ba Thai" (probably a cover name), formerly the deputy chief of the Ministry of Public Security in Hanoi.¹⁰⁵ As head of the Security Section, "Ba Thai" was probably also a member of the COSVN Current Affairs Committee, and concurrently chief of the Security Section Party committee.¹⁰⁶ (His cover name frequently changes, so it is probable that "Ba Thai" is now called something else.¹⁰⁷)

24. Many of the less important decisions, and most of the routine and administrative and Party matters are handled by the chief's deputy, or by one of the representatives of the subsections. Security Section

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correspondence is frequently signed "on behalf of" or "for" the Leadership Committee, or its chief.¹⁰⁸

25. Subsection B1 is the administrative component of the Security Section. It is divided into twelve elements,¹⁰⁹ five of which have been positively identified (the correspondence, the "management," the food supply, the "operational," and the financial cells.¹¹⁰) The subsection's strength, in early 1966, was 63 men,¹¹¹ having dropped from a strength of 96 men a year earlier.¹¹² (During 1965, the Security Section was under considerable pressure to reduce the number of administrative personnel¹¹³ -- a pressure that continues as the need for additional soldiers increases.)

26. The Financial Cell, many of whose account books were captured during Operation JUNCTION CITY in early 1967,¹¹⁴ keeps detailed records of money transactions of the Security Section's components. Its books include not only the monies expended on regular administrative matters, but also funds apparently spent on clandestine operations. (Unfortunately, available translations do not break down the latter expenditures.¹¹⁵) The cell also supervises the financial activities of the sub-sections, by holding periodic audits of funds,¹¹⁶ and by such means as constantly dunning them to "settle all accounts" by certain days of the month.¹¹⁷

27. The Correspondence Cell handles routine and sometimes unusual letters, circulars, and directives, and maintains a log of all incoming and outgoing correspondence.¹¹⁸ It apparently takes care of the Leadership Committee's paperwork, and keeps in close contact with the Security Section's Commo-Liaison Subsection (B8), which delivers the mail. It also runs a rental library, whose books, as a Viet Cong functionary recorded in 1965, were "loaned and returned 480 times" during the year.¹¹⁹

28. The other cells of the Administrative Subsection handle a variety of routine matters. The food supply cell draws rations from COSVN's Finance and Economy Section, the Operations Cell handles such matters as clothing allowances, while the Management Cell apparently takes care of personnel matters. The flood of paper which gushes from the Administrative Subsection has included announcements of staff meetings, outlines of procedures for establishing contact with the outside world, postal regulations,¹²⁰ and a circular notifying subsections of the hours of the COSVN PX.

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29. Subsection B2, whose overall function is unclear, may be one of the COSVN Section's internal security components. It is divided into three major parts: an office staff (with 32 men), an armed reconnaissance component (consisting of Units 15, 17, 19 and 21, totalling 46 men), and a component entitled "Permanent Section 9" (with 87 men).¹²¹ In early 1966, its total complement was 165, almost double the number it had a year earlier.¹²² It is one of the subsections about which we know least.

30. One document of early 1966 indicates that B2's "office staff" is composed primarily of researchers, but does not indicate what the researchers do.¹²³ The Armed Reconnaissance Units may be those mentioned in another COSVN Security document concerning certain recon teams "designated to study battlefields," to administer "newly liberated areas," and to guard exit and entries corridors,¹²⁴ but this is far from sure. What the members of "Permanent Section 9" do is a complete puzzle.

31. The strongest evidence suggesting that the COSVN "B2" subsection has an internal police function is that "B2" subsections at region, province, and district perform such a role. This, of course, is evidence of the most tenuous kind and does not explain why the "research" staff is so large (unless it maintains national files) or what the role is of the 87-man "Permanent Section 9." In mid-1965, Subsection B2 ran the COSVN Security Section jail.¹²⁵ The jail was later transferred to Subsection B10 (See Paragraph 43.).

32. Subsection B3's role appears to be one of research. B3 is very small, having had a staff of four in January 1965,¹²⁶ which grew to 17 men in early 1966,¹²⁷ with a programmed complement of 24.¹²⁸

33. Its small size, its equipment, the type of memoranda it produces suggest (but by no means prove) the research function. Among the office supplies it asked for in 1966 were newspapers (in Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian, French and English), maps and overlay papers and films for pictures and documents.¹²⁹ It maintains an extensive file on "counter-revolutionary" personnel.¹³⁰

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34. Its memoranda include a policy paper on Viet Cong attitudes towards foreign newsmen ("especially French and Japanese"), and a circular on the activities of certain "pro-American Cambodians."¹³¹ Among the documents it has reproduced is a GVN directive concerning counterintelligence tasks in the Self-Defense Force.¹³²

35. Subsection B4 appears to be a small guard component, whose duties include (or used to include, before the advent of the "COSVN Physical Security Section") the protection of foreign visitors.¹³³ In early 1966, its complement was 30 men,¹³⁴ having grown from a strength of 14 the previous year.¹³⁵

36. Subsection B5, according to the only available document describing it,¹³⁶ is a "production" component. Production components normally grow rice and raise cattle for consumption by their parent units. Common throughout Viet Cong territory, they are designed to make VC base areas as self-sufficient as possible in food, in order to be a small drain on the Viet Cong economy. Production workers are often transients, or low-level personnel, assigned on temporary duty (sometimes as punishment) from the parent unit. Subsection B5 is omitted from distribution of routine COSVN Security Section information circulars,¹³⁷ and from Security Section pay rosters.¹³⁸

37. Subsection B6 is the Security Section's Internal Security and Intelligence School. Since many of its files were captured in Operation BIRMINGHAM in the spring of 1966, information on it is relatively abundant.¹³⁹

38. In early 1965, its staff was top heavy, with a strength of 87 in March. Under intense pressure to reduce administrative personnel during the year, it grew progressively smaller, so that by March 1966, only 24 staff members remained.¹⁴⁰ They probably included the school chief and his deputy,¹⁴¹ a small administrative staff (a finance officer, an accountant, a supply officer, an official in charge of trainee records, and one or two clerk-typists¹⁴²), a medical staff (a doctor and a nurse¹⁴³), and a staff of instructors. The school does not have regular semesters. Rather, classes start at irregular intervals, with as many as four going on at the same time.¹⁴⁴

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39. Subsection B7 appears to be the Security Section's permanent military component. The only permanent Security Subsection armed with a machine gun, it may be the "organic mobile unit" occasionally referred to in documents.¹⁴⁵ As of October 1965, it had a strength of 102 men, with a planned complement of 204.¹⁴⁶

40. Subsection B8 is the Security Section's Commo-Liaison component, with a staff (in 1966) of about 35 members.¹⁴⁷ The subsection delivers correspondence to other agencies of COSVN, to the regions, and to nearby districts and provinces. In 1965, the subsection "made 164 routine trips, performed 83 unexpected escorts of visitors, transmitted direct and express correspondence, and guided students and draftees."¹⁴⁸ Permanent commo-liaison corridors appear to have been set up with Regions I through IV, and with districts and provinces in the area of War Zone "C." A document of early 1966 suggests the COSVN-Saigon (Region IV) corridor is the one most heavily travelled.¹⁴⁹

41. Subsection B9 is the COSVN Security Section's logistical component. It maintains an armory,¹⁵⁰ food depots, and has a distribution component, equipped with pack bicycles.¹⁵¹ The subsection's last known strength was 39 people.¹⁵²

42. The armory contains ordinary pistols (Brownings, Walther P38s, Czech 7.65 mms, "K.54s"), rifles and carbines (Bloc, "CKCs," German Mausers, Bloc K44s, French MASs), submachine guns (folding buttstock, Bloc AKs) and a stock of Claymore mines and grenades. The armory also keeps a stock of silencer pistols, presumably for use by assassins.¹⁵³ Its customers include the COSVN Security Section's ten subsections, members of the Tay Ninh and Binh Long Province Security Sections, and the regions. In July 1965, for example, it was planning to send to Saigon six K50 submachine guns, 20 Walther pistols, 5 silencers, and 60 blocks of TNT.¹⁵⁴

43. Subsection B10 is the COSVN Security Section's interrogation and detention facility. Its last known strength (April 1966) was 35 men,¹⁵⁵ with a planned component of 50.¹⁵⁶ The subsection is organized to include a leadership committee, an interrogation and indoctrination element, a jail administration component, and a guard unit.

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44. The number of detainees held by the subsection rarely exceeds twenty. They are of two types: Viet Cong personnel from COSVN agencies suspected of harboring "anti-revolutionary" sentiments, and various military and civilian Allied officials. The latter type of prisoner apparently includes "important" Vietnamese captives,¹⁵⁷ an occasional U.S. POW,¹⁵⁸ and prisoners of particular interest to other subsections of the Security Section, some of whom are brought from afar. It is apparently a matter of policy to conceal from Allied captives the fact that they are being questioned at COSVN.¹⁵⁹ Whether any of the subsection's interrogators speak English is unclear. In the questioning of an American captive, a subsection interrogator used an English-speaking Vietnamese prisoner as an interpreter.¹⁶⁰

Other Elements

45. Some elements of the COSVN Security Section are unclear as to organizational subordination. These include:

a. The Espionage Component, traces of which are clearly evident in several Security Section documents. The espionage component appears to be organized in the standard manner of a typical Security Section espionage component and includes a "city security" element.¹⁶¹ (City security elements are discussed at some length in Chapters III and IV.) Since COSVN Security Section's case officers operate in both Cambodia and South Vietnam,¹⁶² the espionage component may be broken down into foreign and domestic bureaus. Much of the espionage component's activity appears to be centered around Saigon.¹⁶³

b. A Signal Component (or components) which is almost certainly present, because of the large amount of radio equipment -- including transmitters and receivers -- mentioned in Security Section documents.¹⁶⁴ It appears from some documents that certain security elements have their own radio facilities (for example, one called "A3"¹⁶⁵). Some Security Section radio operators appear to have been trained in North Vietnam.¹⁶⁶

c. Crypto Components. It seems likely that the Security Section has its own cryptographers, not only because of the number of radios associated with the section, but also because lower echelons in the security apparatus have been identified as having cryptographers.¹⁶⁷ It

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seems unlikely that a command element would lack what its subordinates have as a matter of course.

d. A "Guerrilla Unit." Several documents indicate the existence of a "Guerrilla Unit" (apparently codenamed "Village 5") attached to the COSVN Security Section.¹⁶⁸ Apparently the unit is not a permanent formation, but seems to take shape only when Allied sweep operations threaten War Zone "C." A report of May 1966 listed its armament as four machine guns, 14 submachine guns, and 114 rifles.¹⁶⁹

46. One component not mentioned in COSVN Security documents but which may exist nonetheless is a radio-intercept and cryptanalysis facility. Its presence is suggested by the COSVN Security Section circular (picked up in VC Ba Ria Province) which directed provincial security personnel to take steps to capture South Vietnamese police crypto material.¹⁷⁰ Almost certainly such material would be for the use of cryptanalysts, and radio monitoring personnel. Whether such personnel are assigned to the COSVN Security Section cannot be ascertained with available evidence.

NOTE: For an overall account of the COSVN bureaucracy, see MACV J-2's The Central Office of South Vietnam (CICV Study ST 67-023, 29 April 1967).

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CHAPTER III

THE SPECIAL CASE OF REGION IV: THE SAIGON-CHOLON-GIA DINH SPECIAL ZONE

I. Background

1. Viet Cong Region IV, dominated by the city of Saigon, is unique. To the Viet Cong Security Service, its singularity is threefold. First, Region IV is the most heavily populated area in South Vietnam; second, it contains most of the Service's high-level target installations; and third, Allied security and counterintelligence personnel are far more plentiful in Saigon than elsewhere.

2. Saigon is crowded not only by Vietnamese standards; it is the most crowded city in the world.¹⁷¹ In the last seven years, principally because of the influx of refugees caused by the war, its population has almost doubled and is now estimated at well over 2.5 million.¹⁷² The immediate area surrounding Saigon is also heavily peopled. To cope with the peculiar demography, the apparatus has outsized "city security" components.

3. As capital of South Vietnam, Saigon contains most of the country's policymaking and governing machinery. Included are the headquarters of the Viet Cong Security Service's highest priority targets: the Directorate of National Police, the Directorate of the Military Security Service, the Headquarters of the Central Intelligence Organization, the Ministry of Security, and ARVN J-2. Likewise, Saigon quarters the command components of Allied intelligence organs, which are also leading targets: MACV J-2 and its subordinates, and the Vietnam headquarters of various American civilian intelligence organizations. The city also contains the leading elements of religious and political organizations the Service attempts to penetrate: the leadership of the General Buddhist, and of the United Buddhist Associations, the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in South Vietnam (and related lay organizations such as the Catholic Greater Solidarity Force and the Catholic Citizen's Bloc),

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and the front offices of political groups such as the Dai Viet Party and the Hoa Hao political party, among many others. Because of the abundance of such targets, the Region's apparatus puts an unusually heavy emphasis on the espionage components of its urban and suburban organization.

4. Finally, Saigon and its environs abound with South Vietnamese and Allied security personnel. There are more uniformed and plain-clothes policemen in Saigon than in any other area of Vietnam. The city also teems with Vietnamese and American military police and a variety of Allied counterintelligence and counterespionage officials. These forces (and the threat of them) have compelled the Region's Security Service to emphasize secrecy to an uncommon degree and to employ the cell system frequently for compartmentation.

5. Despite the problems and special conditions, the field apparatus of the Ministry of Public Security in Region IV appears well-developed. Although it has undergone a series of reorganizations and shifts in mission, the apparatus in 1967 is similar in many respects to what it was in the early and mid-fifties.¹⁷³ A large proportion of its members is highly experienced, having joined the Service in the late 1940's, if not earlier.¹⁷⁴ Many have also served with COSVN or with MPS offices in North Vietnam.¹⁷⁵ Others have attended the COSVN Security School.¹⁷⁶

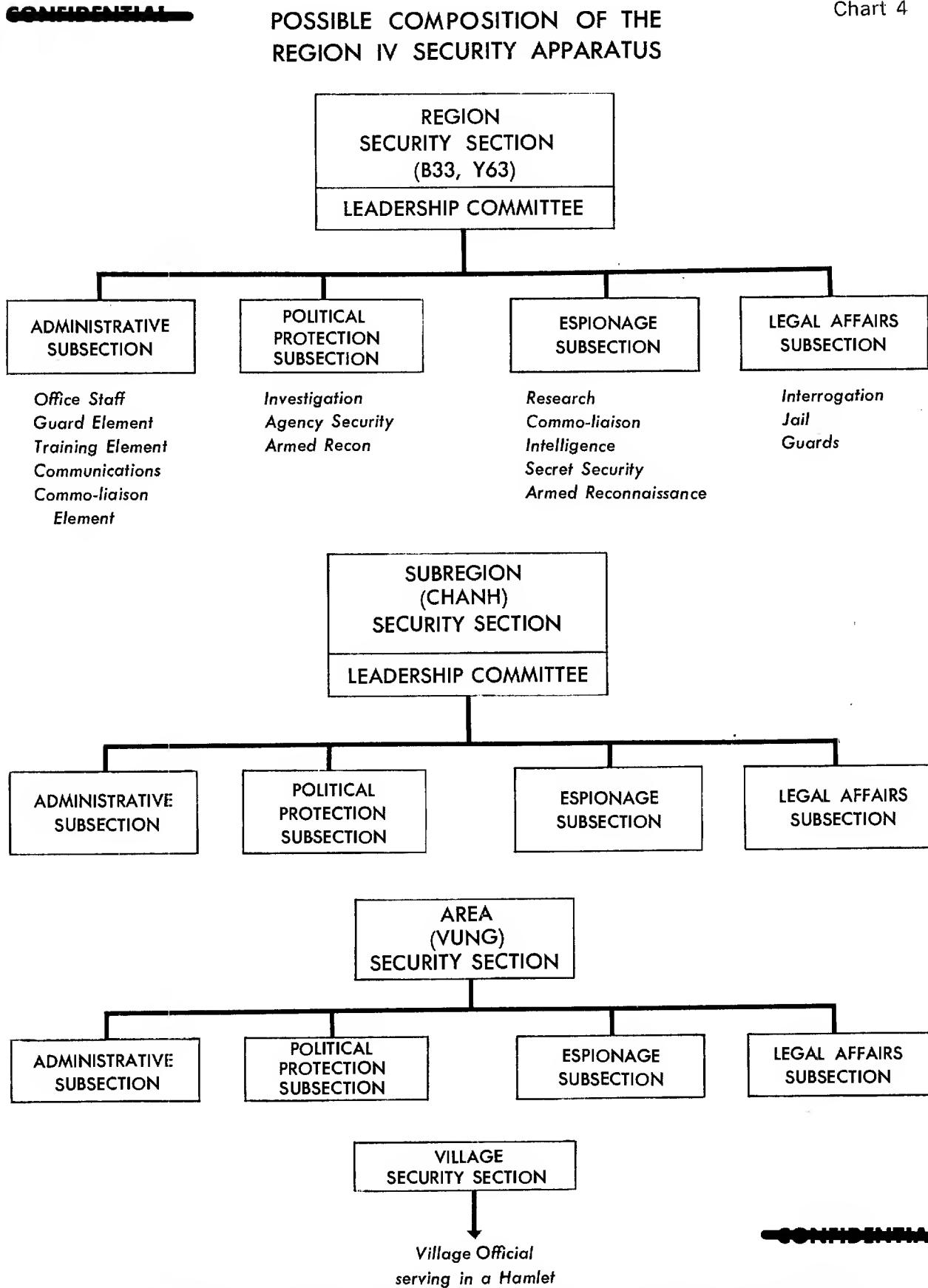
6. The Viet Cong, in drawing the administrative divisions within Region IV, use nomenclature different from that employed by the South Vietnamese Government and from that which they themselves use in other areas. Instead of splitting the region into "provinces" and "districts" -- the usual administrative divisions in a region -- the Viet Cong have broken down Region IV into "Subregions" (or "Chanhs") and "Areas" (or "Vungs"). Thus, in descending the administrative ladder in Region IV, one passes the Region, the Subregion, the Area, and the Village, before arriving at the Hamlet. A Viet Cong "Subregion," such as Nha Be, is equivalent to a GVN District.

7. The Region IV Security Section, codenamed B33 (also coded Y63, and with letter box numbers 303/c and 603/c), appears to be operating in six subregions (Chanhs), which, in turn, are broken up into from two to six areas (Vungs) apiece.¹⁷⁷ There have been occasional

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Chart 4



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reports of other subregions in Region IV, but the evidence on them so far has been inconclusive. The subregions identified to date are as follows:

- a. Binh Tan (codenamed A23, whose Security Section code is A536)
- b. Cu Chi (codenamed A25, whose Security Section code is H204)
- c. Di An (codenamed A21, Security Section code presently unknown)
- d. Go Mon (codenamed A22, Security Section coded P58)
- e. Nha Be (codenamed A24, Security Section code believed to be K450)
- f. Thu Duc (codenamed A20, Security Section code presently unknown)

8. A paramount question concerning the overall administrative breakdown of Viet Cong Region IV remains unanswered: whether there is a Saigon City Party Committee. Available evidence indicates there is not; nor is one referred to in captured documents. However, Hue, Da Nang, and Can Tho, among other urban areas, have City Committees, so the existence of a similar institution in Saigon cannot be precluded. If it exists, it almost certainly has a Security Section of its own, probably parallel (although subordinate) to the Region IV security apparatus.

II. The Functions of the Region

9. The functions of the Security Section of Region IV are basically similar to those in other areas and echelons. (See Chapter V for a discussion of the functions of a provincial apparatus.) They include the following activities:

- a. Collection of information on the organization and activities of Allied positive intelligence and counterintelligence services, and on Vietnamese political parties and religious sects.

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b. The kidnapping or assassination of Allied intelligence and security officials, and the sabotage of Allied intelligence and security installations.

c. Aggressive counterespionage in areas contested by the Viet Cong and the South Vietnamese Government.

d. Countermeasures against the GVN Chieu Hoi program and against the increasing emigration of the populace away from Viet Cong areas.

e. Detailed planning, contingent upon Viet Cong victory, for nationwide state security operations in South Vietnam.

f. Training of security, espionage and counterespionage personnel.

10. In carrying out its missions, the Region Security Section provides detailed guidance to subordinate the subregions and areas, often levying on them intelligence requirements of a national significance. Thus, the Region IV Security Section may order a subregion to obtain information on a South Vietnamese National Police plan that applies to the whole country rather than to the Saigon area alone. The Section also deals with security matters which extend well beyond its geographic confines. It is a focal point for agents recruited by Security Sections outside its jurisdiction for service in Saigon.

III. The Region Organization

11. The Region IV Security Section, whose overall organization is unclear, appears to have at least four major elements: an Administrative Component, an Internal Security/Counterintelligence Component, an Espionage Component, and a Legal Affairs Component. Whether there are others is not known. It is run by a Leadership Committee.

12. The Leadership Committee, according to a recent interrogation report, is headed by an ethnic northerner,¹⁷⁹ with the rank of a major.¹⁸⁰ The report indicated his two deputies are regroupees but did not mention when they had infiltrated south. The committee probably also contains representatives from the subsections. The Section Chief almost certainly

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sits on the regional Current Affairs Committee, to ensure that the activities of his subordinates are coordinated with other Viet Cong civilian and military components. He is probably in frequent touch with the MPS in Hanoi and with the head of the COSVN Security Section, which appears to pay particularly close attention to the Service's activities in the Saigon zone.¹⁸¹

13. The Administrative Component performs routine support and administrative duties. Considering the amount of correspondence the Region IV Security Section produces, both its courier element and office staff are probably large. Region IV security couriers frequently traverse the corridor between region headquarters and COSVN in War Zone "C" -- where several captured documents have indicated their presence.¹⁸² They also carry messages to Subregion Security Sections and apparently to the Security Services of Tay Ninh and Binh Duong Provinces as well.¹⁸³ The Security Section Administrative Component may also handle the Section's electrical communications facilities, which are probably extensive.

14. The Internal Security/Counterintelligence* Component of Region IV performs duties in Viet Cong "liberated" areas similar to many of those performed by the South Vietnamese Special Branch police in government-controlled territory. The duties include the protection of the region base area against Allied intelligence penetrations, and the investigation of suspected Allied agents. Although its members undoubtedly cooperate with the investigative-internal security elements of the sub-regions and the areas and directs many of their activities, the extent of such cooperation and direction is unclear.

15. The Espionage Component of Region IV's Security Section is its most active and aggressive element. The component engages in espionage and counterespionage operations, probably in Saigon City, and possibly in the capitals of the subregions.¹⁸⁴ It also engages in terrorism, including assassination, kidnapping, and sabotage. (As noted in Chapter II, silencer pistols and blocks of TNT were among the supplies forwarded to the Region IV Security Section from the COSVN Security Section's arsenal in 1965.¹⁸⁵) The Espionage Component is also responsible for developing counterintelligence informant nets in government-controlled areas.

*Labelled "Political Protection" in Chart #4.

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16. The Legal Affairs Component maintains interrogation and detention facilities. The jail's inmates probably include captured policemen and South Vietnamese intelligence officials, as well as suspects and "reactionaries."¹⁸⁶ Little information is available on this component.

17. It is evident from captured documents that Region IV maintains a counterintelligence and espionage school, although neither its size nor whereabouts are certain. A recently captured notebook, for example, contained an entry which noted the presence outside Saigon of a school for "large numbers of agents," whose instructors "had been trained at the Security School" in North Vietnam.¹⁸⁷ The North Vietnamese "Security School" referred to was probably the MPS Academy at Ha Dong.

IV. The Subregions, Areas and Villages

18. Subregions (or Chanh) Security Sections are subordinate both to the Subregion Current Affairs Committee and to the Region IV Security Section. They are responsible for overseeing the activities of their subordinates, for running counterintelligence operations of their own, for training the security personnel of the lower echelons, and for conducting espionage and armed reconnaissance operations in government-controlled areas.

19. Direction to lower echelons most frequently takes the form of security missives, which are sent to the areas or -- apparently bypassing the areas -- directly to villages.¹⁸⁸ Such directives, which cover a variety of subjects, are frequently concerned with combatting Allied pacification activity.¹⁸⁹ The investigations carried on by subregion counterintelligence personnel are both independent and in coordination with the lower echelons. Although areas exercise some autonomy over local informant nets, final responsibility and overall control of village counterespionage appears to be retained by the subregions,¹⁹⁰ which also conduct periodic training courses for their subordinate personnel.¹⁹¹

20. All six subregions conduct espionage and counterespionage operations in government-controlled areas outside Saigon City. There is conclusive evidence that Binh Tan Subregion also operates within Saigon itself. (See paragraphs 23 - 26, below.) Whether Binh Tan is typical or unique is unknown. One recent report [REDACTED] 25X1A2g suggests the Nha Be Subregion Service also operates in Saigon.

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21. Area (Vung) Security Sections, the intermediate echelon between subregion and village Security Sections, are responsible for running operations both in Viet Cong and in government-controlled territory. With an average strength believed to be in the neighborhood of from 10 to 15 men, the Vung Security Section probably has limited capabilities. The Vung Service, which has a counterintelligence role in the "liberated Zone," performs executive actions in regions dominated by the South Vietnamese Government. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] section had once received instructions to kill a Viet Cong military officer who had defected to the South Vietnamese Government.¹⁹³ This task, although carried out in territory out of Viet Cong control, has the legal status of an execution under Vietnamese Communist Party law and is analogous to similar executive acts performed by the KGB in non-Soviet territory.

22. Village Security Sections, which directly control security officials serving in the hamlets, appear to be the same in Region IV as they are in the other regions of South Vietnam. (See Chapter VI.) They are responsible for maintaining informant nets in Viet Cong territory and for keeping track of the whereabouts and allegiance of the local inhabitants. In doing so, Village Sections keep extensive records of suspects and of where the population resides,¹⁹⁴ thus combining the functions of public safety, internal security and collection of operational counterintelligence.

V. The Binh Tan Security Section

23. Binh Tan is one of the six confirmed subregions in Viet Cong Region IV. (See paragraph 4, above.) Captured documents indicate that its Security Section is heavily involved in espionage, armed reconnaissance, and counterintelligence activities in Saigon City.

24. The Section is organized for activities in both Viet Cong and government areas. A document written on Christmas Day, 1964, indicates that it then consisted of "a chief of section, two 'members,' an unspecified number of office personnel, covert security elements operating throughout Saigon City to collect information, and armed reconnaissance elements whose special mission was to eliminate

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dangerous RVN personnel."¹⁹⁵ Another report, written at approximately the same time, indicated that the Binh Tan Service planned to have a total of 632 agents working in Precincts II and IV of Saigon City by the end of 1965, organized into "147 Secret Security Cells and 11 Armed Intelligence [possibly Armed Reconnaissance] Cells."¹⁹⁶ Whether Binh Tan realized its agent recruitment plan is not known, but its "armed elements" -- whose equipment included a stock of grenades -- were probably involved in the rash of bomb-throwing incidents directed at police targets throughout 1965 in Saigon.

25. An action plan -- also of late 1964 vintage -- revealed that the Binh Tan Section had drawn up a set of contingency plans on what to do in the event of a coup d'etat.¹⁹⁷ The plans called for not only assassination of "dangerous RVN security and administrative personnel, politicians and newsmen," but also for the capture of documents, and the "occupation" of key posts -- including prisons and the "United States Information Service." Although the plan is probably outdated, it would seem probable that another, revised, version exists.

26. The Binh Tan Security Service is also involved in counter-intelligence activities in Viet Cong territory. Its security plan for "liberated areas" for the first quarter of 1967 dealt with the "resettlement and protection of the population," and "the classification of people living in the liberated areas, including persons who shuttle between government and VC-controlled areas."¹⁹⁸ Among the people it was keeping track of were GVN intelligence agents,¹⁹⁹ and Viet Cong deserters.²⁰⁰

NOTES: a. A supplementary memorandum on the Region IV Security Service is in process.

b. A supplementary memorandum on the Espionage and City Security Elements of the Viet Cong Security apparatus is also in process.

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CHAPTER IV
OTHER
REGIONAL SECURITY SECTIONS

I. Region Subordination

1. There are now seven Viet Cong regions: Regions I through VI, and the newly-created Region X (See map.). The first four were formed out of Nam Bo, COSVN's predecessor, and are clearly subordinate to COSVN. So is Region VI, and so, probably, is Region X. The subordination of the security apparatus of Region V, which encompasses the northern half of South Vietnam, is less clear. It may be run directly from the MPS in North Vietnam, sending only certain of its documents to COSVN for "report."²⁰¹ Some of Region V's security officials have attended the COSVN Internal Security/Counterintelligence School (See Chapter II, Paragraphs 14 - 16, and 37 - 38.), but many others have attended the MPS School at Ha Dong.²⁰² A determination of the subordination of the Region V security apparatus must await further evidence.

II. Functions

2. Regional Security Sections have most of the same tasks as their provincial subordinates. Basically, they are responsible for keeping COSVN, the region's Party hierarchy, and almost certainly the MPS informed, for supervising and occasionally assisting in the activities of the lower echelons, for maintaining internal security in region base areas, for conducting active counterespionage operations in government areas, and for training security personnel from region through village levels.

Keeping the Higher Levels Informed

3. The Region Security Section has two immediate masters: the COSVN Security Section (possibly excepting Region V), and the Region Current Affairs Committee. On certain matters it is responsible to a third -- the MPS in Hanoi.

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4. Like the Province Security Section, the region apparatus produces both periodic and ad hoc intelligence reports. Its periodic reports, produced monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, and annually,²⁰³ are partially distillations of the periodic reports it receives from the provinces in its jurisdiction, and partly an interpretation of region-wide security events as seen from region headquarters.²⁰⁴ A draft of the annual report of Region III for 1965, for example, covered seven subjects: the "enemy" (i.e., Allied) situation, an overall view of security activities in the region, an outline of the region security mission, a short review of city espionage and city security apparatus, an appraisal of the security service's growth during the year, a review of strong and weak points of the Party's leadership, and a critique of the year's achievements.²⁰⁵ Such reports are sent as a matter of routine to a Region Security Section's hierarchical overseers.

5. As a backup for such reports, the Security Section keeps extensive files of correspondence and reports from below. The files include reports on enemy espionage (U.S., police, etc.), on local political parties, on the GVN armed forces, and on religious organizations. For a list of files kept by Region III in 1966, see Annex C.

6. High-level cadre from Region Security Sections occasionally visit COSVN for consultation and probably attend the periodic security conferences almost certainly convened at COSVN from time to time. Region Security Sections (with the possible exceptions of Region V and VI) maintain permanent commo-liaison corridors with COSVN,²⁰⁶ and are probably in radio contact with both COSVN and the MPS in Hanoi.²⁰⁷ Some of the region's communication equipment is forwarded through the COSVN Security Section's supply and equipment depot.²⁰⁸

Supervising and Aiding the Lower Echelons

7. Regions Security Sections supervise the lower echelons with the same devices used by COSVN: directives, inspection teams, and the summoning of provincial cadre to the region for consultation.

8. Regional directives, although not as detailed as those of the provinces and districts, are more specific than COSVN directives,

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which tend to be general statements of Viet Cong security policy. A few examples of regional directives are listed below:

- a. A Region I Security Section directive, dated 7 April 1967, addressed to provincial security sections in its jurisdiction, about "civilian spy forces indirectly controlled by the U. S. CIA." The directive requested information on the organization, functions, operating procedures, relationship to "U. S. spies," of the "training program at Vung Tau," together with the number of students in attendance.²⁰⁹
- b. A Region VI directive which indicates that clerks, cryptographers, radio operators, and workers at message centers at South Vietnamese military intelligence and police agencies are given top priority for recruitment as penetrations.²¹⁰
- c. A Region III directive to province and district Security Sections concerning the guarding and surveillance of prisoners held in security jails.²¹¹
- d. A Region V directive of 12 July 1966 addressed to VC Daklak Province outlining the security missions to be accomplished by the province in the latter half of the year.²¹²
- e. A Region III organization plan (in draft) outlining force goals for province, district, and village Security Sections within its jurisdiction. The plan -- probably based on an overall COSVN directive -- takes into account the differences in size and situation of the various provinces.²¹³

9. The Region Security Sections also send inspection teams to the provinces to "give them assistance" in grasping the security situation.²¹⁴ Furthermore, they summon province cadres for consultation, both individually and at periodic region-level security conferences. Region III, for example, held a security conference in 1963²¹⁵ and in March 1966,²¹⁶ while Region V apparently held such conferences in both 1966 and early 1967.²¹⁷

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Internal Security and Counterintelligence

10. Region Security Sections are responsible for maintaining internal political security within region base areas,²¹⁸ and to an undetermined extent, for running investigations in support of counterintelligence operations conducted at the lower echelons. They also act as a region-wide clearing house for counterintelligence information.

11. To protect the region base area, the Security Section sends teams of investigators, or "reconnaissance units" to areas deemed threatened by the Allied intelligence. The Section also supervises the creation of "security guard" units for other agencies in the region bureaucracy. A Region III Security Section report of March 1966 noted, for example, that "15 of the 16 sections and units" belonging to the region had activated security guard sections under the Security Section's guidance.²¹⁹ Another region document indicated that the Security Section was conducting 186 investigations, and that a "security cadre team had been sent to the provinces to assist them in security operations."²²⁰

12. Region Security Sections maintain jails to hold prisoners and suspects. A recent defector from a province Security Section indicated that provinces send their most important prisoners to region for interrogation. He stated that if an American intelligence or counterintelligence official were captured, he would probably be questioned at a region interrogation facility, if not that of COSVN.²²¹

13. Large numbers of regional intelligence reports and circulars indicate that region Security Sections act as a depository and dissemination point for counterintelligence information throughout their jurisdiction. Some of the information stored at region is acquired from the provinces. A "letter" sent from Thu Dau Mot Province to Region I is an example of information so acquired. It described an organization allegedly created by "the CIA," and gave the organization's reported address in Saigon.²²² Another letter (with the same sender and addressee) described a "Volunteer Student Association" supposedly created by the South Vietnamese police to investigate students at a certain school.²²³

14. Intelligence circulars sent from region to the lower echelons cover a wide variety of subjects. A small sampling of captured regional

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intelligence circulars follows:

- a. A Region III Security Circular distributed to province Security Sections describing a one-month espionage course given by South Vietnamese government in Can Tho Province, with the information that the spies "would be disguised as hired harvesters, fortune tellers, and cloth merchants."²²⁴
- b. A Region VI Security Circular sent to province Security Sections stating that the South Vietnamese government had formed an organization called the "Central Montagnard Affairs Directorate" in Saigon. The information, based on captured GVN documents, briefly described the organization.²²⁵
- c. A Region I Security Circular to province Security Sections indicating that Catholic leaders in South Vietnam would hold a 7-day meeting in Saigon on 30 September 1966 to study and apply reforms passed by the Vatican's "Second Ecumenical Congress."²²⁶

Espionage and Aggressive Counterespionage

15. Although it is known that Region Security Sections run operations in government-controlled areas, neither the scope nor size of such operations can be determined with the evidence available. A late 1965 report from Region III indicated that the number of "spies" recruited by region had increased 80% since 1963 but did not mention, even in broad terms, where they were located, or how they were run.²²⁷

16. It is probably safe to assume, however, that the regional espionage apparatus concentrates on relatively high-level targets, such as GVN Corps and Police Region headquarters, and that their targets are the same as those aimed at by other echelons: Allied police, intelligence, and internal security organizations.

Training

17. The number of security trainees taught at Region Counter-intelligence/Internal Security Schools each year probably runs in the low

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thousands. During 1965, the Region III School, for example, taught 819 students, who attended the following courses:²²⁸

One "key cadre" course²²⁹ for 107 province and district level trainees.

Two training courses for a total of 55 Village Security Section chiefs.

Two training courses for a total of 190 "reconnaissance" students and students "in charge of political protection," probably members of provincial or district Security Section "B2" subsections: See Chapters V and VI.

Three training courses for a total of 467 students in interrogation, indoctrination and administration.

25X1X6 18. One of the 467 students who took the last-mentioned course

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course he attended began in August and lasted for 75 days.²³⁰ The course consisted of lectures given in the morning and afternoons with study periods in the evening. The subject matter of the course included not only interrogation techniques, but instruction on how to indoctrinate a captive "to become a good VC." Like all courses given by the Communists, there was a heavy overlay of political indoctrination.

III. Organization

19. Although the Allies have captured large numbers of documents issued by region Security Sections, none has dealt directly with their organization. One must, therefore, guess at how they are configured. After looking at Security Sections at other echelons (which strongly resemble one another) and comparing them with the meager evidence available on regional organization, one can draw a picture which is reasonably accurate.

20. Available information suggests that regional Security Sections, headed by a Leadership Committee, are divided, like their provincial

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subordinates, into at least four parts: an Administrative Subsection, a Political Protection Subsection, an Espionage Subsection, and a Legal Affairs Subsection. There appear to be other elements as well.

The Leadership Committee

21. Captured documents do not describe the leadership of a regional Security Section. A prisoner taken in April 1966 in Phuoc Long Province, however, stated that the head of the Region VI Security Section was a Lieutenant Colonel²³² -- that is, the same rank as the official who reportedly headed the COSVN Security Section.²³³ It would appear, therefore, that the MPS hierarchy considers the post of regional Security Section chief as one almost as important as that of the COSVN Section.

22. If the Leadership Committee of a region section resembles those of both its subordinates and superiors,²³⁴ as seems likely, it consists of a chief, a deputy chief, and representatives from the various subsections. During Leadership Committee meetings, the chiefs and representatives probably coordinate the activities of their subsections.

An Administrative Subsection

23. COSVN, province, and district Security Sections all have Administrative Subsections. There is little reason to believe that a regional section would not, particularly since documents suggest that many of the personnel associated with an Administrative Subsection serve at region level, including typists,²³⁵ file clerks,²³⁶ and couriers.²³⁷

A Political Protection Subsection

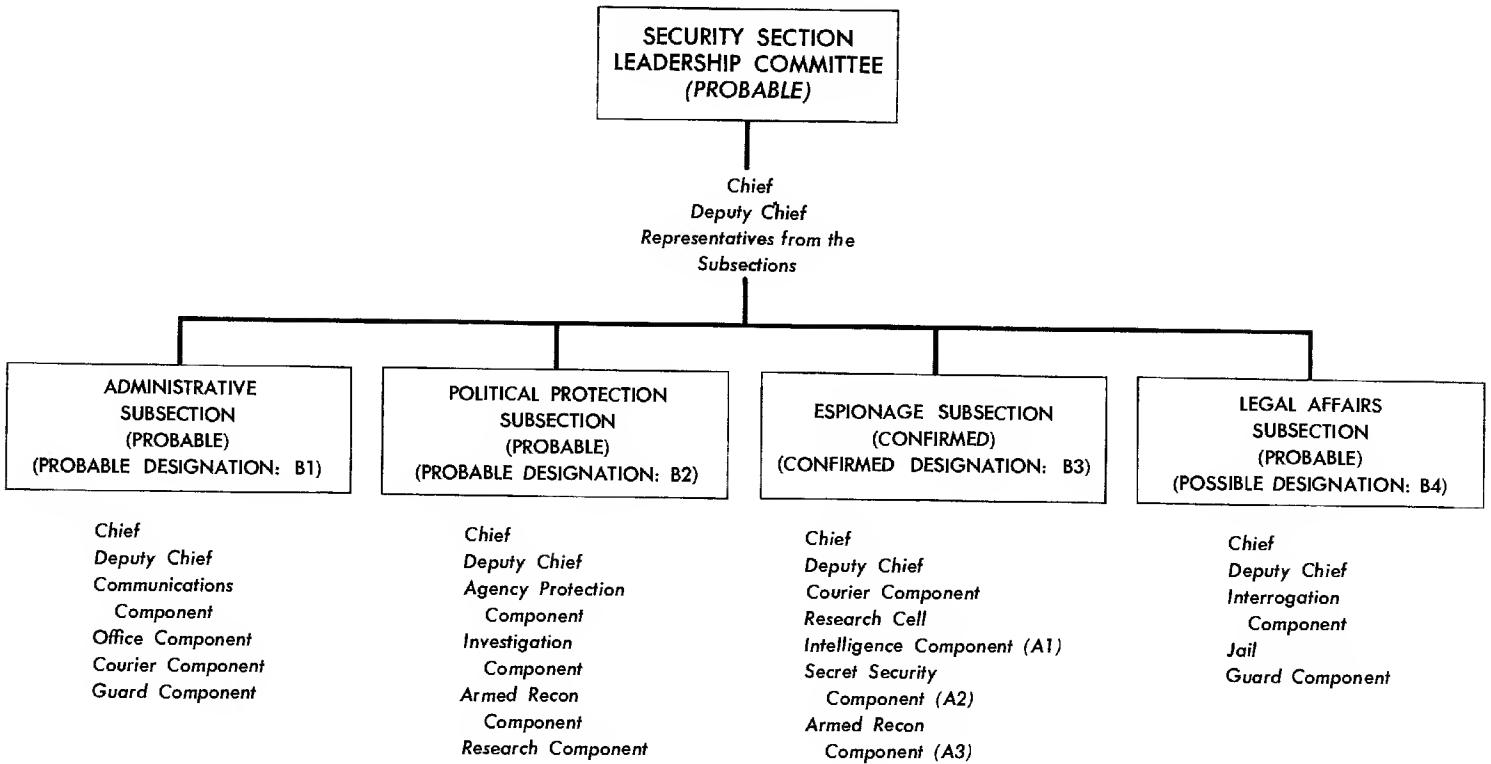
24. There is ample documentary evidence to indicate that Regional Security Sections contain a subsection concerned with internal security and defensive counterintelligence.²³⁸ It is also probable that such a subsection is divided into several functional parts, including one that is primarily concerned with protecting the region base area,²³⁹ and another which assists provincial Security Sections in running investigations.²⁴⁰ The subsection probably also contains a research element,²⁴¹ which would maintain files on suspected Allied agents and sympathizers.

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Chart 5

POSSIBLE COMPOSITION OF A REGION SECURITY SECTION



Known Component, Subordination Unclear: Internal Security/Counterintelligence School

Possible Component: Radio Intercept and Cryptanalysis Element

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The Espionage Subsection

25. Surprisingly, more is known about the organization of a Region Security Section's Espionage Subsection than about any other component. Like other Espionage Subsections down the hierarchical ladder, it is codenamed "B3"²⁴² and appears to be organized in the manner broadly ordained by COSVN in 1964.²⁴³ It contains an intelligence component²⁴⁴ (also translated "espionage") probably responsible for running agent penetrations in Allied intelligence organizations, a secret security (or "city security") component,²⁴⁵ charged with developing informant nets in Allied controlled urban areas, and an armed reconnaissance component,²⁴⁶ probably responsible for kidnapping and assassinating Allied intelligence and security personnel.

26. The Espionage Subsection also has a courier component and a research cell. The functions of the research cell include the study of "enemy documents on Political Action Teams, Intelligence, Combat sic, S-3 documents, Special Forces, and the Vietnamese Kuomintang (VNQDD)."²⁴⁷

A Legal Affairs Subsection

27. A Region III document of 1966 clearly indicates that the region then had the equivalent of a provincial Legal Affairs Subsection, with both a "judiciary" and "Public Security" component.²⁴⁸ The "judiciary" element almost certainly included an interrogation and detention facility, while the "Public Security" element presumably included a detachment of public order police (equivalent to the uniformed South Vietnamese Police). There is no further information on either component at region level.

Other Components

28. The document which suggested the existence of a Legal Affairs Subsection at region level (see previous paragraph) also indicated that there were "other subsections" than the ones mentioned already.²⁴⁹ We can only guess what they are. Two suggestions follow:

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a. An internal security/counterintelligence school may exist as a separate entity at region level, even though at province the training element is a sub-component of the Administrative Subsection. The principle reason for suggesting that the school is separate at region is size. With an output over 800 students in 1965, the Region III Internal Security School may have equalled, or even slightly exceeded, the 1965 output of the COSVN Security Section school.(which is a separate sub-section).

b. The existence of a radio-intercept, cryptanalysis component at region level has no direct evidence to support it. It is interesting to note, however, that a region directive indicated that the top targets for security penetrations were "clerks, cryptographers, radio operators, and workers at South Vietnamese military intelligence and police agencies."²⁵⁰ This does not prove that region Security Sections have radio intercept and cryptanalysis facilities (since key lists acquired by the region Security Service could be easily turned over to some other organization or echelon for exploitation), but merely raises the possibility.

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CHAPTER V

PROVINCIAL SECURITY SECTIONS

I. Background

1. The Vietnamese Communists had been laying the groundwork for a countrywide provincial police apparatus well before the creation of the Ministry of Public Security in 1946. In My Tho Province, for example, a Viet Minh police force came into being on 19 August 1945, five days after Japan's surrender in Tokyo Bay. 251

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that the My Tho force originally had 30 members, including twenty former employees of the French police, and ten who were "introduced" to it by a person later identified as a senior Communist security official. 252

2. Evidence is lacking on the development of the provincial security apparatus during the late 1940's. By the middle of 1952, however, documents indicate that it was well developed. A decree, issued in August of that year by the "Nam Bo Resistance Administrative Committee" shows that the Viet Minh provincial security apparatus then had functions almost identical to those of the present Viet Cong Service. 253 Then, as now, there were elements concerned with routine office administration, with internal security (similar in function to its adversary, the French Surete), with espionage (against "the command organs of the U.S. and French espionage," according to a 1953 document 254), and with routine police matters. After the Geneva Accords of 1954, the provincial apparatus went deep underground.

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3. Although the Communist security apparatus continued to operate at provincial levels after the French left South Vietnam in 1955 and 1956, we have little evidence to attest to its existence. 257 The

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relative blackout in information continued until 1963, when ARVN soldiers captured a number of security documents written the previous year. The evidence indicated that the basic organization of the apparatus had altered little in the intervening years. ²⁵⁸

4. Thus, between 1952 -- the first year for which we have good evidence on the provincial apparatus -- and the present day, its basic organization and functions are unchanged. Having settled on a workable security system for the provinces, the Communists have avoided the constant major reorganizations, and lack of organizational continuity that have plagued the security machinery of the South Vietnamese Government. Even more important, the Communist Security Service has had a much smaller turnover of personnel. Unlike their government counterparts, Viet Cong provincial Security officials seldom transfer laterally, often remaining at the same jobs, or type of job, for years, accumulating vast amounts of knowledge about a relatively small piece of territory.

5. As one might expect, the Viet Cong security apparatus varies from province to province. The security section of the highland province of Kontum, for example, differs considerably from the Security Service of Rach Gia Province, in the southern Delta. Yet, functionally and organizationally, the two are almost identical. Kontum has a "city security" element, for example, like Rach Gia's. ²⁵⁹ Both provinces are apparently complying to the same organizational directive promulgated by the COSVN Security Section in December 1964. ²⁶⁰

II. Functions

6. Provincial Security Sections have six basic tasks. They are responsible for keeping higher levels informed; for providing internal security for the provincial bureaucracy; for supervising lower-level security activities throughout the province; for running internal security operations in VC-controlled areas in the provinces, both independently and in cooperation with the local levels; for training hamlet, village, and low-level district cadres; and for conducting espionage and counterintelligence operations in government-controlled areas, particularly province capitals.

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Keeping the Higher Levels Informed

7. The Province Security Section reports, either regularly or occasionally, to at least four higher echelons: the province Current Affairs Committee, the Region Security Section, the COSVN Security Section, and the MPS in Hanoi. Its reports are both periodic and ad hoc.

8. The Province Current Affairs Committee is the Security Section's most immediate (and closest geographically) superior. As such, it probably receives most of the section's reports, presumably including the majority -- if not all -- of its periodic assessments,²⁶¹ and many of its day-to-day information reports.²⁶² Since the Current Affairs Committee is seldom more than a few kilometers from the Security Section, the reports are almost certainly carried by hand, probably by a commo-liaison agent of the Section's Administrative Subsection.

9. Region Security Sections apparently receive almost all periodic reports of their provincial subordinates, including monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual assessments.²⁶³ Because of their length -- captured annual reports have run from 27 to 54 single-space typewritten pages²⁶⁴ -- they are probably carried by hand by province commo-liaison agents. Ad hoc provincial intelligence reports are also sent to region,²⁶⁵ but it is uncertain whether, as a matter of practice, they are hand-carried, or transmitted electrically. Reports in which the region has an urgent interest are probably radioed. (Since some provincial Security Sections are over a hundred miles from region headquarters, it is hard to see how this could be otherwise.)

10. Periodic reports submitted by Provincial Security Sections to the Province Current Affairs Committees and to Regional Security Sections can be extremely comprehensive. A report from the Binh Dinh Province Security Section (apparently for the first quarter of 1966) was thirty single-space pages long and included a detailed analysis of the overall situation in the province and of the activities during the quarter of Allied ranger units, espionage components, Vietnamese political parties, and "religious sects."²⁶⁶ The Binh Dinh report is similar in subject and format to several others the Allies have captured in the last two years.²⁶⁷

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11. So few security documents addressed either to COSVN or to the MPS in North Vietnam have been captured by the Allies that it is difficult to ascertain what kind of report is sent. One such captured document (addressed to COSVN -- codenamed C112 -- and the "Public Security Ministry, Vietnam") was a report on the "Second Jubilee Security Congress of Ca Mau Province," held in February 1966.²⁶⁸ Another document addressed to COSVN (in this case codenamed "R") and to the MPS (codenamed "C231") was a report concerning the defection to the Vietnamese Government of two "veterans of the Resistance against the French." The MPS's copy was to be "transmitted electrically."²⁶⁹ If reports on such minutiae are regularly communicated to Hanoi, the amount of similar traffic must be substantial.

Providing Internal Security for the Provincial Bureaucracy

12. Like the COSVN Security Section (which is responsible for the internal political security of COSVN base areas and agencies), the Province Security Section keeps tabs on the political reliability of provincial officials. The Section's "Political Protection" subsection (usually codenamed B2) maintains files on those of the provincial bureaucracy it considers potentially unreliable. Since the Section emphasizes prevention rather than cure, much of its internal police function within the provincial organization is devoted to political indoctrination and to lectures to provincial employees on the virtues and necessity of security maintenance.²⁷⁰

13. In pursuing this mission, the Security Section enlists the aid of the security components of other parts of the provincial bureaucracy (for example, the security subsection of the province's Military Proselyting Section). A provincial "Security Plan for 1966" stated that the "security (sub)sections of (other) agencies will be consolidated under . . . the technical guidance of the Security (Section) chief."²⁷¹

14. The security chief, according to a recent province-level security defector, enjoys a prerogative which other civilian section chiefs do not. If he sees fit, he may report on the activities of provincial officials -- including the head of the Current Affairs Committee -- directly to the region Security Section, bypassing the hierarchy of the provincial bureaucracy.²⁷²

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Directing and Supervising the Lower Levels

15. The Province Security Section closely supervises its district subordinates and does its best to see that overall Communist security directives are applied in the villages and hamlets throughout the province. Among the means it employs are the issuance of detailed security directives tailored to local situations, the dispatch of inspection or "roving" teams to lower echelons, and the requirement that lower-level -- particularly district -- officials frequently report to the province section for consultation.

16. Large numbers of provincial security directives have been captured by the Allies. Unlike those of COSVN, which are usually general (See paragraph 13, Chapter II), provincial directives are often extremely detailed. The following are a small sample of captured provincial security directives:

a. A directive, issued by the Thua Thien Security Section, concerning the issuance of laissez-passers to "non-organic" personnel going into a "War Zone."²⁷³

b. A directive of the Thua Thien Security Section addressed to sub-areas of Quang Dien District, requesting reports on a certain Allied heliborne operation that had occurred two weeks earlier.²⁷⁴

c. A directive addressed to security elements of Ba Ria Province, concerning the "preservation of forests" -- presumably to foil Allied reconnaissance aircraft. The directive was written because village security elements in Long Dat District had mistakenly granted permission to farmers to cut palmetto leaves in a "liberated area."²⁷⁵

d. A directive, issued by an unidentified provincial Security Section in GVN III Corps, detailing how background investigations should be conducted for newly recruited soldiers in an upcoming recruitment campaign.²⁷⁶

17. Provincial security officials frequently visit lower echelons to inspect their subordinates' operations, personnel, and finances. Finance officers of the Province Security Section conduct periodic audits

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of district funds,²⁷⁷ while security subsections in some provinces maintain "roving" or "mobile control" teams, to monitor the activities of the districts and villages.²⁷⁸ Province inspections occasionally result in the imposition of draconian measures. In Thua Thien Province, for example, the province Security Section took control of district jails because of the districts' "careless administration of detention camps."²⁷⁹

18. Province Security Sections also exercise direction over district officials by summoning them for consultation. District Security cadres are expected to attend "Security Congresses" at province level for "discussion and training."²⁸⁰ In addition, for certain acts -- such as executing captives (according to a recent defector³¹) -- the districts must get prior approval from province.

Training

19. Training is carried on not only at Security Congresses but also during regularly scheduled instruction courses, given by province security officials. Some provinces hold two or three such courses a year, others hold as many as eight. Attendees include rank-and-file security officials from district level, village security section chiefs and their deputies, and leading hamlet cadres. The reported yearly output of provincial security students has ranged from 28 (in Kontum) to 213 (in Can Tho).²⁸² Larger provinces, such as Binh Dinh, probably have an even larger annual output of security students.

20. Subjects taught at province levels include armed reconnaissance, surveillance, the keeping of dossiers, and the Viet Cong legal system. All such courses are given with a strong overlay of political indoctrination. Documents make no mention of province-level espionage courses, which appear to be given only at COSVN and region training schools. Some provinces have permanent training staffs,²⁸³ while the training courses of others are conducted by temporarily assigned province security officials. Formal province courses are usually from four to six weeks long.²⁸⁴

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Internal Security and Counterintelligence

21. Province Security Sections run internal security operations in Viet Cong-controlled areas, both on their own and in cooperation with the lower echelons. They serve as a focal point for internal police information obtained from the districts and disseminate security circulars to warn their subordinates of threats from Allied intelligence or commando organizations. They also help the district and village security elements to keep "public order" in Viet Cong territory and generate province-wide propaganda campaigns "to motivate the people to maintain security."²⁸⁵

22. Because their internal security (or "Political Protection") subsections are relatively small, the provincial Security Service can run only a limited number of operations in Viet Cong areas. They do, however, operate informant nets separate from district and village nets, and carry on independent security investigations of suspected "reactionaries," allied agents, and "landlords" suspected of sympathizing with the government.

23. Most activity of the Political Protection Subsection, however, is in conjunction with district and village Security Sections. Typically, in a developing operation, a district Security Section will ask for help from province,²⁸⁶ which will send (when possible) a team of "inland" or "internal" security agents to aid in the investigation. Similarly, the provincial service helps districts to detect and counteract Allied "commando" (or "Biet Kich") units operating in Viet Cong controlled areas.²⁸⁷ The "Political Protection" subsection maintains "armed reconnaissance" personnel who apparently engage in this task.

24. The Provincial Security Section serves as a clearing house for internal security information in its jurisdiction. On the one hand, district Security Sections continually report security information to province. Conversely, the province section feeds information to the lower echelons by means of security "circulars." Examples of province security circulars follow:

a. A circular issued by Thua Thien Province concerning a Viet Cong cadre suspected of working for the South Vietnamese Government under the cover name of "Hoi" (real name unproven). (The circular describes information "Hoi" was privy to.²⁸⁸)

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b. A Thua Thien circular informing the districts of an unusual group of government "spies" in the area, disguised as Viet Cong but whose black pajamas were sewn with a thread not ordinarily used by the Viet Cong. ²⁸⁹

c. A circular of Ba Ria Province concerning "sapper cells" recently formed by the South Vietnamese Government for use against local VC cadres. ²⁹⁰

25. Province security agencies send certain types of information to security organizations out of their immediate jurisdiction. In April 1967, for example, the Tay Ninh Province Security Section informed its Long An counterpart of the desertion of a VC soldier from his unit in Tay Ninh, but whose home was in Long An. ²⁹¹

Operations in Government Areas

26. Provincial Security Service Espionage Subsections run operations in government-controlled areas, usually to gather counter-intelligence information. Their targets include the GVN police, Vietnamese Government, Allied intelligence organizations, local and national political parties, various religious organizations, and Allied pacification and "commando" ("Biet Kich") personnel. ²⁹² The last category includes Provincial Reconnaissance Units, Revolutionary Development Teams, and Census Grievance Workers. The Espionage Subsections' four basic methods of operation, in probable order of desirability, are recruitment-in-place, attempted defection, kidnapping, and assassination. The provincial Espionage Subsection also draws up overall plans for security espionage organs throughout the province, assigning targets to district and village security espionage personnel in order to avoid duplication of efforts. ²⁹³

III. Organization

27. The typical province Security Section is headed by a leadership committee and has four major parts: the Administrative Subsection (usually codenamed B1), the Political Protection Subsection (usually B2), the Espionage Subsection (invariably B3), and the Legal Affairs Subsection (usually B4). There are occasional variations in nomenclature, in cover

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designations, and in the number of subsections,²⁹⁴ but the variations are usually unimportant; Security Sections are organized functionally, and the tasks of all Security Sections are almost always the same. For the sake of clarity, therefore, this memorandum will describe the typical Security Section and will not dwell on variations.

The Leadership Committee

28. The Leadership Committee (also called the "Command" or "Steering" Committee) is composed of the chief of the Security Section, one permanent deputy, and representatives (usually the heads) from each of the subsections. The section chief, almost invariably a security official of several years' experience, has two immediate masters, the head of the province Current Affairs Committee and the regional Security Section. He exercises detailed control over the security subsections, gives direction and guidance to the district services under his province's jurisdiction, and coordinates the activities of his provincial subsection and district subordinates.

The Administrative Subsection (B1)

29. The Administrative Subsection (also called the "Office Staff") operates directly under the Leadership Committee, providing it with protection and administrative support. The composition of the Administrative Subsection of the Security Section of Soc Trang Province in March 1966 gives one an idea of the services it performs.²⁹⁵ The subsection, totalling 26 men, consisted of:

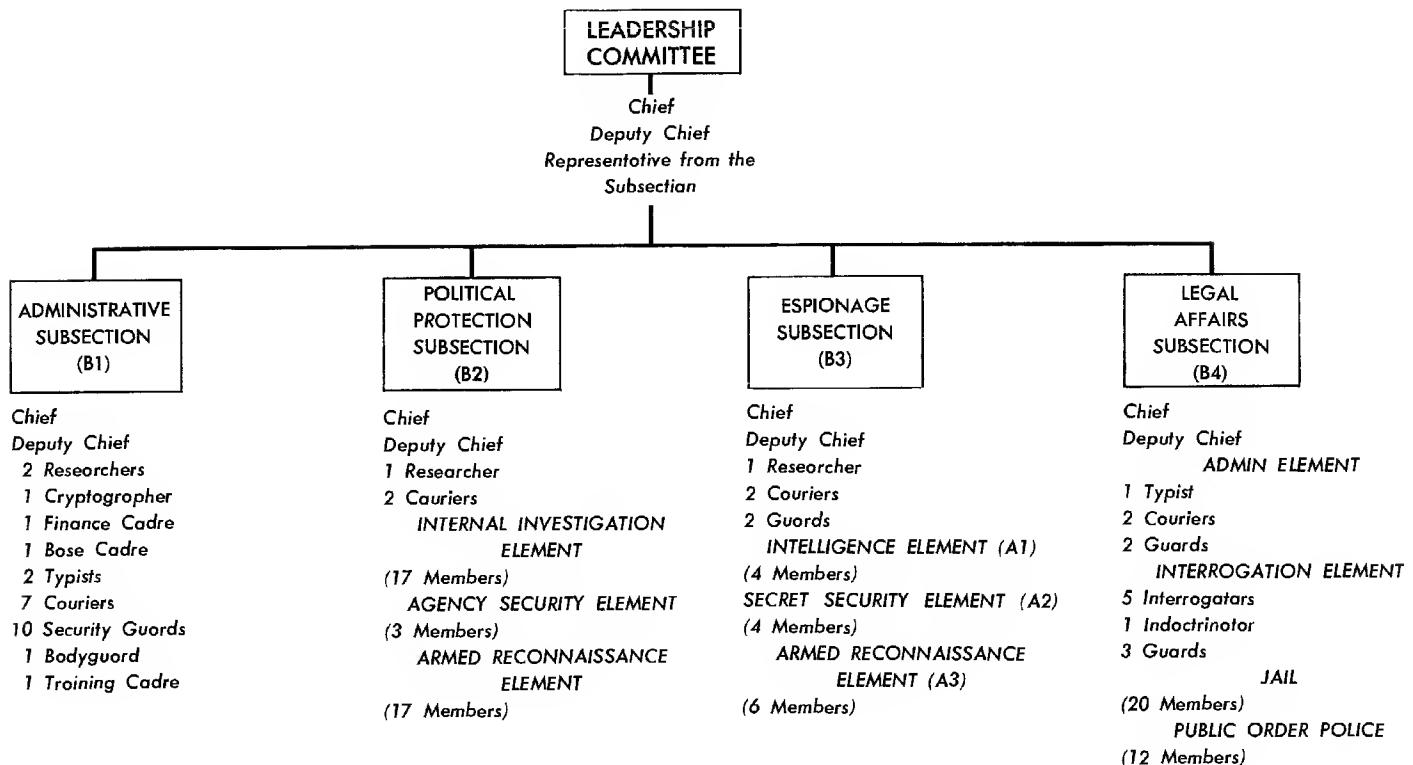
- A Chief
- A General Research Cadre (also deputy chief)
- A cryptographer (who doubled as a researcher)
- A Finance Cadre
- A "Base" Cadre (functions unknown)
- Two Typists
- Four Liaison Agents (for carrying messages to region)
- Three Liaison Agents (for carrying inter-agency memoranda)
- Ten Security Guards
- A "Bodyguard" (presumably for the Security Section chief), and
- A Training Cadre

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A TYPICAL PROVINCE SECURITY SECTION

Chart 6



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30. Although other provincial security Administrative Subsections differ in detail, captured documents indicate their general similarity to that of Soc Trang.²⁹⁶ The absence of a radioman in the complement suggests that Province Security Sections use the electrical communications facilities of some other provincial component -- possibly the Party Committee or the Province Unit.

The Political Protection Subsection (B2)

31. The Political Protection Subsection (also translated as the "Political," the "Political Security," the "Security Guard," and the "Internal Security" Subsection) is responsible for the internal security of Viet Cong-controlled territory. It is roughly equivalent to the French Surete, or to the South Vietnamese Police Special Branch.

32. The same Soc Trang Province document which outlined the composition of the Administrative Subsection (See paragraph 29, above.) also provides the clearest picture of the composition of a provincial Political Protection Subsection.²⁹⁷ (Soc Trang's Political Protection Subsection, with forty men in 1966, was not entirely typical because it was larger than most.²⁹⁸) An analysis of the document suggests that the subsection -- headed by a chief, a deputy, with a research assistant -- was broken into three main components:

a. An element apparently charged with internal investigations in Viet Cong territory, composed of seventeen "internal reconnaissance agents."

b. An element apparently charged with internal security within the provincial bureaucracy, composed of three "agency security guards"

c. An element charged with armed reconnaissance in Viet Cong territory, composed of seventeen "armed reconnaissance agents."

33. The subsection chief, like the Security Section chief, is ordinarily a security official of long experience. He is usually a member of the Security Section Leadership Committee, where he reports, receives instructions, and coordinates the activities of his subsection

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with the others, particularly the Espionage (B3) Subsection,²⁹⁹ and the Legal Affairs (B4) Subsection, which runs an interrogation facility.

34. The internal investigation element runs investigations in Viet Cong-controlled areas to detect Allied spies and informants, "reactionaries," or anyone else whose sympathies are suspect. The element apparently is responsible for developing nets of "underground and in-place agents" in sensitive places,³⁰⁰ with investigating Viet Cong deserters and defectors,³⁰¹ and with supervising lower echelons in their mission of recruiting "security maintenance nets, Secret Association members, and internal security organizations."³⁰² (See Chapter VI concerning grass-roots security organizations.) The element frequently helps district and village internal security personnel run investigations and apparently keeps files -- their completeness is by no means certain -- of "bad elements" in Viet Cong-controlled areas. It also sends detailed directives and circulars to the lower echelons, warning them of Allied intelligence threats and giving them directions on how to meet them.³⁰³

35. A related task is spotting contacts in "liberated areas" whom the Espionage (B3) Subsection can use in running operations in government-controlled regions. A document issued by the Binh Dinh Province Security Section indicated internal investigation elements were supposed to: "make a roster of families living in liberated areas with elements working for the enemy Surete and police agencies."³⁰⁴ According to a recent rallier, the internal investigative element does not approach these contacts directly, but turns over their names to its subsection chief, who presumably forwards them to the head of the Espionage (B3) Subsection.³⁰⁵

36. The element within the Political Protection Subsection charged with the internal security of provincial bureaucracy is small, probably because the provincial organization seldom numbers more than a few hundred people. The element is presumably the component within the Security Section responsible for maintaining liaison with security elements of the other provincial agencies.³⁰⁶

37. The "armed reconnaissance" component of the Political Protection Subsection is probably responsible for countering Allied "commando" (or "Biet Kich") units intruding into Viet Cong-controlled areas. The Allies have captured large numbers of security documents

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which demonstrate the Communists' concern about such units.³⁰⁷ It would appear from those documents that the roles of internal security armed reconnaissance units is only secondarily one of combat. Primarily, the units' job is to develop and disseminate intelligence about the "commandos," so that other Viet Cong units or organizations can take action against them. One security document talks about the advisability of "capturing the commandos alive," and interrogating them on the spot "in order to arrest (their) accomplices, ascertain their plans, and disseminate this information to other areas for information."³⁰⁸

38. Apparently in 1965, the Viet Cong decided to assign large numbers of additional "armed reconnaissance" personnel to provincial security sections. Although the captured directives ordering the increase did not state which subsection the new elements would be subordinate to,³⁰⁹ -- they may have been assigned directly to the Security chief -- there are tenuous indications that they were added to the Political Protection Subsection. Soc Trang Province, for example, planned to add a full platoon to the internal "armed reconnaissance" element of the Political Protection Subsection during 1966.³¹⁰ The increase of armed men assigned to Security Sections was probably in response to the fielding in 1965 of growing numbers of South Vietnamese ranger and counter-terror units.

The Espionage Subsection (B3)

39. The Espionage Subsection of a provincial Security Section operates primarily in government-controlled areas. Its duties include penetrating Allied intelligence and "commando" components, recruiting agents in South Vietnamese political parties and religions, kidnapping or assassinating Vietnamese police and intelligence officials, and drawing up blacklists of "reactionaries" and government officials for jailing or execution in the event of a Viet Cong victory. The subsection performs most of its activities in the province capital, either independently or in cooperation with the capital's own security apparatus (NOTE: A supplementary memorandum on the Viet Cong Security Section's Espionage Subsection and its relationship with the City Security apparatus is in process.) Basically, a City Security apparatus is subordinate both to the Province Security Section and to the City Party Committee. See MACV Translation Report 01-2624-67, pp. 4 - 6.

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40. The typical Espionage Subsection, run by a subsection chief and his deputy, is divided into three operational components, supported by a number of organic auxiliary personnel. The three operational elements are the "Intelligence" component (sometimes codenamed A1), the "Secret Security" component (sometimes codenamed A2), and the Armed Reconnaissance component (sometimes A3).³¹¹ Support personnel include commo-liaison agents, researchers, and base area guards.

41. The subsection chief reports directly to the head of the provincial Security Section and supplies him with periodic and ad hoc intelligence reports, including reports on:³¹²

- a. enemy intelligence organizations (numbers, capabilities, missions, wages, training, equipment and motivation)
- b. enemy plans and activities (espionage, counterintelligence, commando, psywar, pacification and Chieu Hoi)
- c. religious and political organizations in enemy areas (numbers, organization, and ideological orientation)
- d. the relationship of enemy intelligence organizations (civilian and military, American and Vietnamese), and
- e. the spies of foreign countries (including France, England and Japan)

42. Some of his reports, if deemed sufficiently important, are forwarded to the province Current Affairs Committee and to Region Security Section.³¹³ Others are turned over to the Political Protection Subsection for use by internal security personnel. Still others are sent for action to district levels.

43. The "Intelligence" component ("Diep Bao," which also means "espionage") is apparently responsible for active espionage operations against Security Section targets. It sets up "cells in enemy intelligence agencies, in reactionary political parties, and in religious sects"³¹⁴ in government-controlled areas, by using traditional techniques. These include "bribing and threatening enemy personnel to provide information,"³¹⁵ and taking advantage of "dissensions between the Americans and their

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(Vietnamese) henchmen,"³¹⁶ in order to recruit agents. Another method the component uses is the selection of "reliable" families in VC areas who have "relatives working for the enemy Surete and police agencies," for dispatch to government areas "to persuade or embroil their relatives with the Revolution, (so that) the GVN police refuse to arrest or suppress the people, or (perhaps) abandon the police and join the people."³¹⁷

44. The "Secret Security" component (An Ninh Bi Mat), apparently called "Urban" or "City Security" as well, appears to have a spotting function in government areas, not only to assist the "Intelligence" component in picking targets, but in drawing up black lists for future use. Much of its work is done in cooperation with the province capital's security apparatus (to be discussed in detail in a supplementary memorandum, in process). According to a notebook taken from the dead body of a security cadre in March 1966, the "Secret Security" (which the notebook called "Urban Security") is responsible for "establishing the initial infrastructure of the security organizations which will operate in government areas after their liberation."³¹⁸ Its specific duties, according to the notebook, included the following:

- a. The collection of information on the plots, organizations, and activities of government agencies, associations, political parties, and religious groups, and the acquisition of biographical data on all government employees and members of groups and parties ("both those sympathetic with and those antagonistic toward us").
- b. The gathering of information on the assigned area, including terrain, population, people opposed to the Revolution, the population's class break-down, locations of abandoned property, local customs and habits, and public property used by the enemy.
- c. The repression of counter-revolutionaries in enemy-controlled areas, when necessary.
- d. The protection, organization and administration of public properties to prevent the enemy's destroying them before "we take over."
- e. The drawing up of plans to repress the enemy and the insurance of order and security during the period "in which we are preparing to take over."

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45. The "Secret Security" component appears to be responsible to two hierarchical entities: the provincial Security Section, as described in this memorandum, and the city Current Affairs Committee.³¹⁹ A recent COSVN directive which stated that the Secret Security (or City Security) component "is a functional element belonging to both the City Party Committee and . . . to the Province Security Section."³²⁰

46. The Armed Reconnaissance element of the Espionage Subsection is responsible for kidnapping or assassinating Security Section targets in government-controlled areas, for capturing documents, and for performing acts of sabotage against intelligence or security installations.³²¹ Its main targets are "the enemy police, Surete agents, secret police, pacification cadre . . . ringleaders who send spies and informants to our liberated areas . . ." and "reactionary party leaders who are ruling the people."³²² The inclusion of the last category suggests that Armed Reconnaissance Teams of the Espionage Subsection indulge in political assassination.

47. Captured documents indicate that the members of Armed Reconnaissance Teams of the Espionage Subsection operate with deliberation and care. Targets are chosen with circumspection, reconnoitered thoroughly, and hit only at propitious moments. Since a provincial Armed Recon Team seldom numbers over a half dozen people,³²³ it usually recruits additional personnel for the larger targets. Occasionally, these are drawn from the police of the Legal Affairs Subsection.³²⁴ (See paragraph 58, below.) For some of the less complicated jobs, like the assassination of individuals or the hurling of grenades at police stations, the reconnaissance component may not get involved at all, but hire or recruit cutouts. This would seem to be indicated by the fact that some assassins captured by the Vietnamese police are children, or thugs, with little or no political awareness or connections.

48. Besides operational components, the Espionage Subsection usually contains a number of support personnel, such as security guards, researchers, and commo-liaison agents. Because of the nature of the Subsection's tasks, the commo-liaison personnel are particularly important. A training document for city commo-liaison personnel in emphasizing their importance, began by stating that "in a city security system, the command agency /as a rule, the provincial Security Section/ is installed

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in a comparatively safe place, but the secret agencies operate right in the heart of the enemy. Therefore the absence of commo-liaison will mean ineffectiveness of command and delays in operation and reporting."³²⁵

The Legal Affairs Subsection (B4)

49. The Legal Affairs Subsection (also called the "Public Security," "Security Force," the "Judicial" and, confusingly enough, the "Administrative" subsection) of the province Security Section is responsible for keeping public order in Viet Cong-controlled areas and for interrogating and detaining suspects and captives. The subsection's personnel are roughly equivalent to the South Vietnamese uniformed police.³²⁶ As a general rule, the Legal Affairs Subsection is the largest of the subsections, sometimes numbering close to 50 people.³²⁷ The typical Legal Affairs Subsection is headed by a chief and his deputy and is divided into four components: an administration element, an interrogation and indoctrination element, a jail, and a detachment of public order police.

50. The head of the subsection, like other subsection chiefs, is usually a member of the Security Section Leadership Committee. There he exchanges information with the leaders of the other subsections and, like his counterparts, forwards regular and ad hoc reports to the section chief. The most important of the ad hoc reports are interrogations of captives and suspects. Those of general interest are sometimes given wide distribution throughout the province.³²⁸ Normal distribution includes the province Current Affairs Committee and the Region Security Section.³²⁹

51. The Legal Affairs subsection chief has a number of duties peculiar to his office. According to a document captured in Thua Thien, they include supervising:³³⁰

- a. The inspection of provincial and district detention camps
- b. The carrying out of legal missions by the lower echelons, in accordance with established procedure (for arrests, judgments, house arrests, and warnings)
- c. Guidance to districts in setting up "People's Courts" (See paragraphs 59 - 60, below.)

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d. The establishment of plans for the training of legal cadres serving at district and province levels.

e. The expediting of interrogations and, most important,

f. The dissemination of Viet Cong security policies among "the people and cadres."

52. The administration element of the Legal Affairs Subsection works directly for the subsection chief. It is small, consisting at most of one or two commo-liaison agents (to carry messages to the Security Section chief or to district detention facilities), a typist (who types up interrogation reports), and one or two guards.

53. The interrogation element consists of from three to six interrogators,³³¹ an "indoctrinator" (sometimes translated as "teacher") and a few guards. The element usually maintains its own small detention facility, separate from the regular province jail. A province-level interrogator who recently defected to the South Vietnamese Government indicated that prisoners brought to his element came either from the districts or from one of the provincial subsections (from B2, B3, or B4's public order police). See paragraph 58, below.³³² At province level, most interrogees were political, with only a smattering of common criminals. (Any person who worked for the GVN in any capacity or sympathized with it was termed a "political prisoner.") The interrogator stated that Americans were not normally questioned at province level, but were forwarded to region. Nor, as a general rule, were military prisoners questioned at the Legal Affairs interrogation facility, since the Viet Cong Military Intelligence and Military Proselyting bureaucracies take care of routine military POW interrogations.³³³ The only military prisoners questioned by the Legal Affairs Subsection came from intelligence, "commando," or security detachments. Although primarily meant to extract information, the interrogations were also designed to convert the interrogatee to the Viet Cong cause. Torture was seldom employed in interrogations, and then only in defiance of VC regulations. "Stubborn" interrogees, or those who were palpable liars, were frequently shot -- although not without approval of the Security Section chief, and the upper echelons of the provincial bureaucracy.

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54. After the interrogation is over, the Security Section chief decides on the disposition of the prisoner. There are four alternatives: execution (only with the permission of the Viet Cong province chief); a People's Court (which frequently results in execution -- see below); release; or incarceration in the province jail.

55. Province jails vary in size. In Can Tho Province, for example, the Legal Affairs detention facility seldom contained more than thirty detainees,³³⁴ while the Binh Dinh Province jail held 325 prisoners in early 1966.³³⁵ Where the jail is large enough, an attempt is made to segregate prisoners by the degree of their alleged guilt (into categories A, B, and C).³³⁶ Thua Thien Province goes as far as maintaining three separate jails.³³⁷

56. An analysis of documents suggests that the administration of security prisons is stern, but by the Viet Cong lights, fair. During the daytime prisoners customarily work at such tasks as digging trenches and tunnels. They are incarcerated only at night. They are supposed to receive the standard fare prescribed by the Viet Cong for civilian laborers (that is, some 750 grams of rice per day). Theoretically, the purpose of imprisonment is not punishment but "reform and indoctrination."³³⁸ Sentences of several years are not uncommon, but prisoners seldom serve more than a few months. According to the Viet Cong theory, the main criterion for release is repentance.³³⁹

57. Surveillance is tight, but because the Viet Cong move detention facilities often to avoid detection, escapes are not infrequent. To prevent mass breakouts, the Viet Cong organize secret cells among the prisoners to inform on potential prison-break leaders.³⁴⁰

58. The Viet Cong public order Police (Doi Trat To) are a fourth element of the Legal Affairs Subsection. Few in number at the province level, they perform routine police work and are usually organized into "mobile control teams."³⁴¹ The crimes over which they have jurisdiction include murder, rape, robbery, fraud, bribery, and misappropriation of public or Party property.³⁴²

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The People's Court

59. The "People's Courts" -- public trials at which enemies of the Viet Cong are sentenced -- are primarily a propaganda device. They are held at province and district levels and are usually staged by the Legal Affairs element of the security apparatus. The trial is ordinarily a solemn affair, with many of the trappings and procedures of a formal court of law, including the presence of "clerks," "magistrates," and even a defense counsel.³⁴³ Since the offense for which a trial is staged is usually grave, the sentence frequently imposed is death. Execution and burial are carried out in private.

60. A document captured in Binh Dinh illustrates the role of the "People's Courts." In choosing a defendant to be tried, the document instructed, "select a typical case (in order to) warn the others."³⁴⁴ The document noted that of 57 executions carried out by elements of the security apparatus during a given time period, only five were preceded by a public trial.³⁴⁵

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CHAPTER VI

THE VIET CONG SECURITY APPARATUS IN THE DISTRICTS, VILLAGES, AND HAMLETS

I. Introduction

1. The base of the Viet Cong security structure rests in the districts, villages, and hamlets of South Vietnam. The uppermost portion of the base is in the district, where a small formal bureaucracy (usually about twenty men³⁴⁶) oversees the activities of the dozen or so villages in its jurisdiction. The size of a village security apparatus varies widely, depending on the extent of Viet Cong domination. A "strong" village can have as many as seven permanent security officials serving at village level, with the same number attached to the hamlets under its administrative control. A village dominated by the government, on the other hand, can have as few as one or two permanent security functionaries, with only a few part-time agents in the hamlets. As a general rule, hamlets have no full-time security officials under their direct control. Permanent security functionaries at hamlet level usually report directly to the village apparatus.

2. A large network of secret associations, secret agents (both individuals and cells) and informants underlies the formal security machinery of the Vietnamese Communist organization. Each hamlet in Viet Cong territory theoretically contains a web of informers through which no foreign particle goes unnoticed. Disputed areas, and even regions controlled by the government are also supposed to be permeated with Viet Cong agents.

3. The goal of the Communist security organization at the grass roots is total participation. In pursuing it, Viet Cong security officers try, by constant propaganda, to imbue the people with the idea that secrecy is of paramount importance. One of the principle tasks of a low-level security official, therefore, is indoctrination, to persuade

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people to keep their mouths shut to outsiders on matters that could harm the Viet Cong, on the one hand, while informing the Communist apparatus of anything untoward, on the other.

II. The District Apparatus

4. "The District Security Section is a functional element belonging to the District Party Committee, and. . . to the Province Security Section. The latter is responsible for providing leadership to the District Security Section in order to help it understand and implement the resolutions and directives of the District Committee and Province Security Section concerning operations to counter spies, reactionaries, psywar and Chieu Hoi activities, to protect the Revolution, and to protect the district's installations and the liberated area," The passage is the first relevant paragraph of a COSVN directive concerning (among other matters) the duties and organization of a district security apparatus.³⁴⁷

5. To implement the overall directive, the district Security Section has a number of specific tasks, almost identical in nature to those of Security Sections at higher echelons. (See, for example, Chapter V, Provincial Security Sections.) These tasks include keeping the higher levels informed, supervising the village and hamlet security apparatus, running internal counterintelligence operations, keeping order in Viet Cong territory, and running espionage/counterespionage operations in government-controlled areas (particularly the district seat), and training.

Keeping the Higher Levels Informed

6. The District Security Section is responsible for feeding security information to the Province Security Section, and to the Current Affairs Committee of the District Party organization. Its periodic reports, usually sent monthly, quarterly, and annually, are similar in content to those forwarded from province to region, and include resumes of Allied espionage and commando activities in the jurisdiction, and a listing of the number of suspects and "enemy" sympathizers in Viet Cong territory.³⁴⁸ Districts also forward to province large numbers of day-to-day intelligence reports, including interrogations of suspects and Allied prisoners, agent reports, and enemy documents captured or stolen from the Allies. District couriers ordinarily make daily runs to

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province, and, as a general rule, the head of the District Security Section personally reports to the Province Security Section chief at least twice a year.³⁴⁹ There is no evidence that district Security Sections possess either radiomen or cryptographers. Their correspondence is ordinarily carried by hand.

Supervising the Villages and Hamlets

7. District Security Sections supervise their subordinates far more closely than the provinces supervise the districts. District directives and circulars, although sometimes general (when broadcasting overall Communist policy) are usually extremely detailed. One such circular, captured in Tay Ninh Province, contained a list of license plates belonging to South Vietnamese national police cars cruising the area, instructing village Security Sections to cooperate with local guerrilla and militia units in "ambushing and capturing" the police, their cars and their weapons.³⁵⁰ Another district circular, also from Tay Ninh, described in detail two police agents operating in the neighborhood and instructed village security officials to arrest them and to forward them to the district security section so that "appropriate measures" could be taken.³⁵¹ A third district circular, captured in Binh Dinh, described a 32-man South Vietnamese Ranger Unit scheduled to operate in the area and directed the villages "to start assigning agents to follow the unit at once."³⁵²

8. District sections also supervise the villages and hamlets by frequently dispatching officials to the lower levels and by summoning lower echelon officials to the security section for accounting. The COSVN directive containing the table of organization (TO&E) for a District Security Section called for four inspectors, whose sole job was to supervise the "village security sections."³⁵³ According to the same directive, village Security Section chiefs and their deputies are summoned to the district once a month "to review the overall situation, to review how the work is being done. . . and to remedy shortcomings."³⁵⁴

Internal Counterintelligence and Public Order

9. The district service's most important tasks are internal counterintelligence and public order. It keeps extensive files on suspected

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and "reactionary" individuals in Viet Cong and disputed areas, carries out investigations in cooperation with village security officials, and maintains a district jail.³⁵⁵ Like the province Security Section, it occasionally holds "People's Courts." (See Chapter V, paragraphs 59 - 60.) The Security Section also keeps track of the ideological status of members of the usually small district bureaucracy.³⁵⁶

10. The district jail, most often used for the incarceration of local suspects, has a high turnover of inmates, mostly because sentences are short -- prisoners seldom stay in district lockups more than a month or two -- but also partly because executions are not infrequent. Huong Tuy District in Thua Thien had nineteen executions in 1965,³⁵⁷ for example, while Binh Khe District in Binh Dinh had some 30 executions during approximately the same period.³⁵⁸ Death sentences are most frequently recommended in the cases of government spies, captured GVN security and police officials, local GVN authorities,³⁵⁹ and Viet Cong Party defectors who have had the misfortune of being captured by the Communists.³⁶⁰ If the number of annual executions put into effect in Huong Tuy and Binh Khe districts is at all typical, the Viet Cong's 230-odd district Security Sections execute some 5,000 persons a year. Many more thousands are probably put to death at province and village levels.³⁶¹ Neither approximation takes into account the assassinations the apparatus performs in areas controlled by the government of South Vietnam.

Operations in Government Areas

11. Although the District Security Sections are small, they mount limited numbers of operations in areas controlled by the government -- particularly district capitals. The operations include espionage against government intelligence and security organizations (also small at the district level), the kidnapping or assassination of government officials -- particularly those concerned with intelligence or counter-intelligence -- and the drawing up of blacklists of government sympathizers in the event of a Viet Cong victory. Target lists of particularly important government officials "marked for execution" also appear to be kept.³⁶² It is probable that many, if not most, of the assassinations of government district officials are perpetrated by VC district Security Sections.

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Training

12. Like the COSVN, region, and province Security Sections, the district security apparatus is responsible for holding training courses for subordinates. District courses are short -- seldom lasting over a week or two³⁶³ -- and usually general in nature. The curriculum of a five-day course (given to 209 hamlet and village trainees) in a district in Binh Dinh Province included the following subjects:³⁶⁴

- a. The Security Missions
- b. Investigations and Research
- c. Targets and Classification
- d. Arrest and Trial
- e. Administration in Liberated Areas
- f. Recruitment of Intelligence Agents
- g. Protection of Bases, and
- h. Defense of Internal Organizations.

Organization

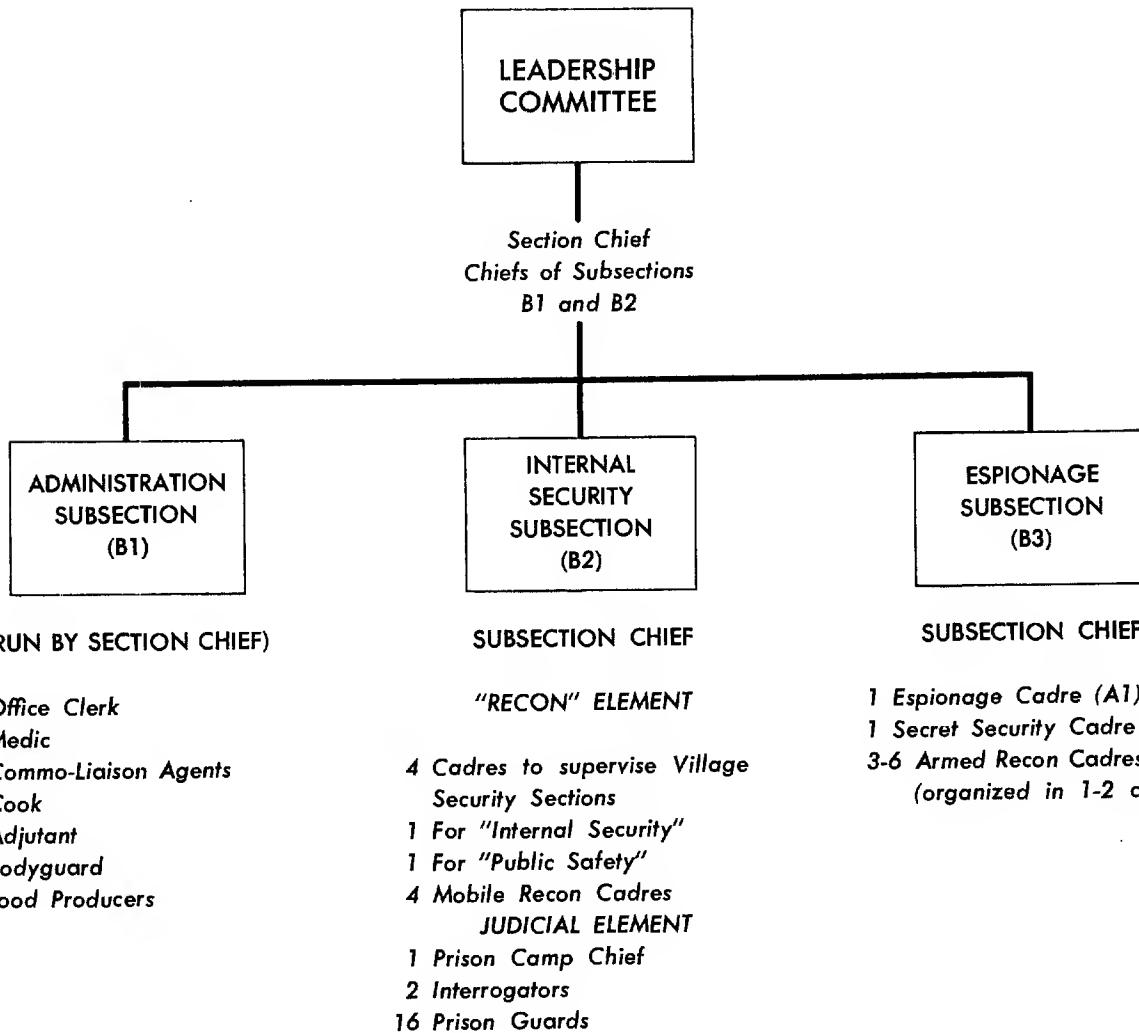
13. The COSVN directive outlining the table of organization of a District Security apparatus divides the Security Section (headed by a Leadership Committee) into three parts: an Administrative Subsection (B1), an Internal Security Subsection (B2), and an Espionage Subsection (B3).³⁶⁵ (See District Security Section Organization Chart.) It is basically similar to the four-part provincial Security Section (See Province Security Section Organization Chart.), except that the province's Political Protection Subsection (B2), and Legal Affairs Subsection (B4) are combined into one (that is, the district's B2 element). The district organization is as follows:

- a. The Leadership Committee is composed of the section chief, and the leaders of the Internal Security (B2) and Espionage (B3) Subsections. Its principle function is to direct and coordinate the activities of the district subsections and the village security apparatus under the district's jurisdiction. The section chief invariably sits on the District Party Committee and is usually a member of its Current Affairs Section.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~TABLE OF ORGANIZATION
OF A DISTRICT SECURITY SECTION*

Chart 7



*According to COSVN directive of mid-1966. (See MACV Translation Report OI-2624-67.) The directive indicates that this organization should be regarded as ideal. In reality, district security sections are seldom this large.

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b. The Administrative Subsection (B1) comes under the direct control of the Security Section chief. Ideally (that is, according to the COSVN directive), it is composed of a clerk, a medic, two couriers, a cook, an "adjutant," and a bodyguard. It rarely reaches its theoretical complement, however, [REDACTED] 25X1X6

25X1X6

[REDACTED] indicated that in 1965 the Ke Sach administrative subsection had an "office chief," two typists, a clerk, and two couriers.³⁶⁶ Even the Ke Sach Administrative Subsection was unusually large.

25X1X6

c. The Internal Security Subsection (B2) is ideally composed of a chief, a "reconnaissance element," and an interrogation/detention element. The "reconnaissance" element, according to COSVN's TO&E, has ten men: four to supervise village security sections, one for "public safety," one for "internal security," and four "mobile reconnaissance" personnel. The "public safety" official is probably equivalent to a South Vietnamese uniformed policeman, while the "mobile reconnaissance" personnel are almost certainly ordinary investigators. [REDACTED] 25X1C 25X1C

[REDACTED]
police and intelligence organizations. This is probably only one of a district investigator's many tasks, which also include tracking down VC deserters and defectors, and detecting government agents and informers. District interrogation/detention elements, although small compared to those at province, are usually the largest single element in a district apparatus. COSVN's TO&E, for example, suggests that the element contains nineteen people (a chief, two interrogators, and sixteen guards). The TO&E is seldom met.³⁶⁷

d. The Espionage Subsection (B3), according to the COSVN directive, should be composed of "six to nine comrades." One heads the subsection, another is in charge of security in government-controlled areas, a third is apparently a counter-intelligence case officer probably in charge of recruiting agent penetrations, and "three to six" are "armed intelligence cadres." As at upper echelons, the duties of the "armed intelligence cadres" of the Espionage Subsection include the assassination and kidnapping of South Vietnamese Government officials.

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III. The Village Apparatus

Functions

14. The 1966 COSVN directive which outlined the duties and organization of a district Security Section (see above) also dealt with the security machinery of villages. It stated that "the Village Security Section (in all three areas: liberated /i.e., VC/, disputed and enemy occupied) is a functional element belonging to the Village Party Chapter, and is also subordinate to the District Security Section. Its missions are: security and counter-espionage; repression of counter-revolutionaries, spies, and reactionaries; protection of the liberated area; protection of the Revolution's forces; protection of public safety and order within the village; supervision of hamlet security operations; internal security within the Liberation Associations and paramilitary forces; and execution of directives from the Village Party Chapter, and the District Security Section."³⁶⁸

15. Like its counterparts up the chain of command, the village Security Section is responsible for submitting periodic and ad hoc reports to the higher echelons -- in its case to the Village Party Chapter, and to the District Security Section. Its periodic reports, forwarded monthly and annually, are miniature versions of reports sent from district to province, and from province to region. They usually include an account of Allied espionage and commando activities during the reporting period, the state of the village and hamlet security organizations within the jurisdiction, and an estimate of the number of "spies" and "reactionaries" in the area.³⁶⁹ Sometimes, they list the "spies" by name.³⁷⁰ The chiefs and deputy chiefs of a Village Security Section are also expected to report to the district Security Section once a month for consultation.³⁷¹

16. The principal operational task of a village Security Section in Viet Cong territory is the recruitment of a network of agents and informants to aid in watching for and detecting government spies and sympathizers. A district directive to a village indicated that such agents are sometimes "deployed" to border areas of Viet Cong territory to watch "various points of entry and exit," and that village security elements are expected to cooperate with other village components in the "intelligence and security prevention task." The directive in question specifically

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recommended that the Security Section "discuss with the (village) Finance and Economy Branch" the feasibility of recruiting merchants and traders on the periphery of Viet Cong territory.³⁷²

17. More often, however, the agents are not "deployed," but left in place to watch for signs of treason among the people in the areas controlled by the Viet Cong. Each village keeps lists of those in its jurisdiction suspected of sympathizing or consorting with the enemy. 25X1X6
Ordinarily, there are three such lists.

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[redacted] described them as follows:

"There were three categories of files: A, B and C, and each consisted of a 100-page notebook. . . . The head of the Security Section kept the files. In 1965 the A file consisted of the dossiers of 20 people that were considered as bad elements and suspected by the Front -- for example, one of them was Anh Chin from Ap Dau Hamlet, who had been discharged from the GVN army after completing his military service. There were about 50 dossiers in the B file -- these were the shirkers who showed no enthusiasm for the civilian labor tasks such as digging up the roads. There were about 100 dossiers in the C file -- these were the people who were also shirkers and who rarely performed tasks for the Front, but who were considered as more trustworthy than those of the B and A files. In a word, the people in the A file had to be watched, and if they no longer came under suspicion their dossiers were transferred to the B file. Those in the B file who improved their performance were transferred to the C file."

18. The number in "A," "B," and "C" categories is forwarded to district and thence to province to be recorded for further report. A province in the Delta, for example, recorded a provincial total of 1,496 in Category "A" in early 1966, 2,055 persons in Category "B," and 1,845 persons in Category "C."³⁷⁴ The labelling of files is not always uniform. In one case, "C" files contained the most dangerous suspects and "A" files the least,³⁷⁵ while in another, the files had numerical designations.³⁷⁶ In all cases, however, the Viet Cong make some attempt at classifying suspects.

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19. Theoretically, in some areas, even more detailed population control files are required. A directive of a district in Viet Cong Region V ordered subordinate village Security Sections to register all "merchants, bar/restaurant operators and waiters, transportation vehicle drivers, firewood cutters, charcoal makers, buffalo/pig traders, hairdressers, Western medicine dealers, male nurses, midwives (with the exception of public health officials), carpenters, masons, photographers, movie cameramen, radio repairmen, plumbers, fortune tellers, sorcerers, trappers, preachers, oriental medical practitioners, and so forth." It is doubtful that many village records are this elaborate. The same directive also ordered the registration of all radios and cameras in VC areas and directed the confiscation of all "illegal weapons and explosives."³⁷⁷ Directives requiring the registration of radios and cameras are common in VC areas.

20. What the Viet Cong security apparatus does with suspects varies with the locality and the extent of Viet Cong control. A few villages have jails³⁷⁸ -- usually no more than thatched huts guarded by a guerrilla or two -- while most (even in the same province) do not.³⁷⁹ Village lockups seldom detain a prisoner more than two weeks. For villages without jails, prisoners are sent to district. Villages are also authorized to execute prisoners,³⁸⁰ although not without approval of the village chief and the head of the District Security Section.

21. An internal security task to which the Viet Cong attach enormous importance is "indoctrination of the villagers in matters of Party and Front policy, especially as related to counterespionage and security matters."³⁸¹ Security indoctrination sessions held by village officials are frequent, and according to Viet Cong documents, well-attended.³⁸² The number of such sessions held annually throughout Viet Cong territory probably numbers in the hundreds of thousands. During the indoctrination classes, village security officials exhort the populace to be suspicious of -- and to report -- strangers, to keep their mouths shut about Viet Cong activities, and to "criticize each other for indiscrete disclosure of secrets."³⁸³ (The Viet Cong security regulations for people in rural areas are contained in Annex A.)

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22. Village security functionaries are further responsible for recruiting agents in contested areas and in those dominated by the government. Although such agents are usually low-level, the basic purpose in recruiting them is the same in the villages as it is in the higher echelons: "to know the activities of the enemy's control and repressive organizations . . . to uncover penetrations. . . , (and) to be ready to repress the counter-revolutionaries when the time comes."³⁸⁴ Village Security Service officials also cooperate with Viet Cong regular or paramilitary units in carrying out raids. Personnel from a Village Security Section in Thua Thien Province, for example, joined a VC Special Action Unit in a raid carried out in early April 1967. The raiders surprised seven women members of the VNODD, kidnapped four of them, shot two "while trying to escape," and released the seventh "because she was about to deliver a child."³⁸⁵

Organization

23. Because Village Security Sections are so small, their formal organization is rudimentary. The COSVN Table of Organization for such sections calls for three to four officials at village level in Viet Cong territory and two to three officials in disputed or South Vietnamese Government areas. The Village Section chief, who has usually been trained at a region school,³⁸⁶ is in charge of the development of security forces, and his assistants are responsible for intelligence collection and internal security.³⁸⁷ In addition to the security personnel at village level there are security officials who serve in the hamlets but who are directly subordinate to the village. The head of the Village Section invariably is a member of the Village Party Chapter (and is usually also on the Village Autonomous Administrative Committee).³⁸⁸

24. Village Security Sections are often larger than what the COSVN organization table calls for. A Viet Cong district official from VC My Tho Province described a seven-man village section, for example. He stated it consisted of a chief, a deputy chief, a file clerk, a cadre in charge of the "underground agent network," another in charge of recruiting and indoctrination of new agents, and two persons to run the jail.³⁸⁹ (As mentioned already, village jails are unusual.) Other Village Sections, up to complement, apparently contain people whose principal job is indoctrinating villagers on security matters. A village official

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(also from VC My Tho Province) said that the Security Section to which he was attached had four members at village level: a chief, a cadre in charge of recruiting agents, and two indoctrinators.³⁹⁰

IV. Security in the Hamlets

25. There is seldom more than one full-time security official serving at hamlet level. In many Viet Cong hamlets, there is none at all. If this is the case, a hamlet Party cell member serves on a part-time basis, and if there are no Party members in the hamlet, a member of the Party Youth Group fills the security slot. It is never left entirely vacant. The post's occupant usually reports directly to the Village Security Section, bypassing the Viet Cong hamlet chief. Hamlet security officials usually visit the Village Service once a month for consultation.

26. The Communists try to compartmentalize their hamlet operations as much as possible so that if one net or agent is compromised others remain. A village security official described the Viet Cong method of compartmentation in the hamlets as follows:³⁹¹ "In principle, in each hamlet there should be at least one three-man security cell led by the Village Security Section member in charge of the hamlet. In addition, there should be a number of secret agents operating in the hamlet. . . directly responsible to the Village Security Section chief. They send their reports directly to him and not to the leader of the security cell in the hamlet. The head of the Village Security Section should not tell the leader of the security cell who in his hamlet is working as secret agents."

27. Underlying the more formal agent networks of the Viet Cong Security Service at hamlet level is a labyrinth of part-time informants. A large Viet Cong hamlet, for example, is broken down into several "house clusters" with informants in each. "House clusters" are responsible not only for their own security, but are supposed to be watchful of their neighbors. Furthermore, "Secret Associations" are formed both within and without the overt associations of the Liberation Front, and reporting on the ideological bent of the association members is done as a matter of routine.

28. A full account of low-level security arrangements in Viet Cong territory -- including the workings of a three-man cell -- is beyond the purview of this memorandum.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A: VIET CONG RURAL SECURITY REGULATIONS

ANNEX B: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS
ABOUT THE ESPIONAGE AND CITY SECURITY ELEMENTS
OF THE VIET CONG SECURITY SERVICE

ANNEX C: FILES MAINTAINED BY THE REGION III SECURITY
SECTION, 1966

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ANNEX A

VIET CONG RURAL SECURITY REGULATIONS

(Translation of a document issued by a Viet Cong provincial committee in October 1966, [redacted])

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I. THE PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SECRECY MUST BE ENFORCED IN HAMLETS AND VILLAGES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE REVOLUTION

1. Prevention of Espionage:

A. Do not show hospitality to any guest if that person is not introduced by a security cadre or a hamlet committee member.

B. Visitors from other areas, regardless of the number of relatives they have in the area or how well they are known, must be approved by the Front or hamlet committee, along with the family guarantor. If the guest is not desirable, the family guarantor will be responsible for the consequences.

C. If a person wishes to settle in a hamlet, in addition to the above formality, he must also have a guarantee from the Front or from the hamlet committee of his former place of residence. This guarantee must be forwarded through the chain of command. Anyone who resettles must carry out the same revolutionary tasks the local people are assigned.

D. Strictly follow the "Three No's" policy /sic/ toward strange men. Try to win them over the Revolution by propagandizing or educating them. All the while maintain secrecy. Promptly investigate all suspicious attitudes.

E. Strictly observe the maintenance of secrecy. Do not try to go into any zone where entry is forbidden by the Front.

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2. Maintenance of Secrecy:

A. Do not disclose to anyone the location of any organization, unit, commo-liaison station, etc., or the name and position of cadres. If you do not know these things, do not seek information about them.

B. Do not disclose information about fortifications, trenches, or hamlet gun pits.

C. Do not discuss revolutionary matters in inns or other crowded places.

D. Do not reveal revolutionary secrets while walking, selling, or working in any place. In face-to-face struggles, if anyone is arrested by the enemy for investigation or seduction from the revolution, protest.

E. The people must continuously remind themselves of the concepts of vigilance and the preservation and maintenance of secrecy. Criticize one another for indiscrete disclosures of secrets.

II. SECURITY ORDERS MUST BE OBSERVED AND SOCIAL EVILS
OPPOSED

1. Gambling in any form is forbidden, as are robbery, prostitution, fornication, and debauchery.

2. Overdrinking and boisterousness should be avoided, especially in inns. Such practices create problems of security in the hamlets.

3. Guard duty and night patrols should be carried out with zeal, in order to preserve security in the hamlets.

4. Boats and sampans in liberated areas, while moving or stopped, must be camouflaged or concealed when aircraft are aloft.

5. If a stranger does not observe the above regulations, he should be reported to local authorities, who will take appropriate measures.

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III. THE PEASANTS MUST BE UNIFIED TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICIES OF THE FRONT

1. To strengthen unity, we must faithfully help people earn their living and educate them to support the Revolution. Anyone who has wronged the Revolution must be reformed.

2. We must respect the rights and profits of all and oppose greedy men who infringe on the rights of neighbors, encroach on their fields, seize their fish ponds, or cause damage to fields or gardens with cattle. We must guard against quarrels; if there are any, we must discuss them with the people in order to dampen enmities so that the integrity and solidarity of the hamlet is preserved.

3. We must continuously participate in every activity and indoctrination session so that we may understand and implement successfully the policies of the Front.

4. We must be generous, yet economical, in contributing manpower and wealth to support the Revolution.

5. We must protest propaganda that distorts the policies of the Revolution and false information that aims at sowing terror among the people.

6. We must not read the enemy's leaflets and newspapers, nor look at his propaganda pictures. When we see such things, we must pick them up and turn them in to the hamlet committee.

7. We must not listen to enemy radio broadcasts, but must listen instead to Liberation Radio, Hanoi Radio, or to the radio stations of other socialist nations.

IV. THE MEANS OF PROPAGANDA AND OF FIGHTING THE ENEMY MUST BE PRESERVED

1. Preserve forests. Do not burn or destroy them. Be timely in reporting anyone who destroys them intentionally.

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2. Defend trenches, fox holes, and combat fortifications. Do not let cattle damage them. Canals and ditches must also be protected.
3. Preserve banners, flags, and slogans displayed along the roads.
4. Repair bridges so that people can circulate safely.

V. DISCIPLINE

Depending on whether faults are minor or serious (that is, unintentional or intentional) in obeying the regulations set forth, discipline will be lenient or severe, respectively.

NOTE: Adjustments were made in the translation for the sake of clarity.

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ANNEX B

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS ABOUT THE
ESPIONAGE AND CITY SECURITY ELEMENTS OF THE VIET CONG
SECURITY SERVICE

1. MACV Translation Report #'s 9-121-65 through 9-127-65: A list of intelligence collection requirements, apparently drawn up in 1965, for espionage/city security cadres in Hue. /Collected in DOD IR #6 075 0699 65/
2. MACV Translation Report #11-0709A-65: A situation report, of 1 June 1965, concerning Hue City, its City Security apparatus, and security targets.
3. MACV Translation Report #04-1241-66: A training document on commo-liaison procedures for a City Security apparatus.
4. MACV Translation Report #04-1242-66: A training document on City Security, undated.
5. MACV Translation Report #05-1502-66: A report on various security espionage missions, dated November 1965.
6. MACV Translation Report 12-2217-66: A review of requirements of a provincial Security Section Espionage Subsection, apparently written in early 1966.
7. MACV Translation Report 01-2624-67, pp. 4 - 6: A COSVN Security Section directive of mid-1966 concerning the reorganization of the City Security apparatus.

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8. MACV DEC Log #04-2740-67: The Missions of an Espionage Subsection; a training document, dated 12 September 1966, in Bulletin 4043, 21 April 1967. /Full translation of 5-page original in process.7

9. MACV Translation Report #05-1215-67: Top Secret Document on intelligence activities of the Viet Cong in government-controlled areas, apparently written in the winter of 1964.

10. MACV Translation Report #05-1220-67: A COSVN Directive written in the summer of 1964, concerning security activities in cities and towns.

11. MACV Translation Report #05-1286-67: The Organization of the Espionage Subsection of Security Sections in Region I, dated 4 March 1966.

12. MACV DEC Log #06-3035-67: A Region VI Directive, dated 12 May 1966, concerning security organization and targeting. /Full translation of three-page original in process.7

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NOTE: A supplementary memorandum on the Viet Cong Security Service's Espionage and City Security elements is in process.

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ANNEX C

FILES MAINTAINED BY THE REGION III SECURITY SECTION, 1966

(As translated in MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66)

Administrative Files

1. Correspondence of Region Party Committee
2. Correspondence of R /COSVN/ and "C" /sic/ Party Committee
3. Correspondence of R /COSVN/ and "C" /sic/ Security Section
4. Routine correspondence
5. Region intelligence reports (Monthly, Quarterly, Semi-annual, and Annual)
6. Region intelligence plans
7. Incoming mail from Region agencies
8. Intelligence and Security Guard Subsection
9. Espionage and City Security /Subsection/
10. Public Security and Judiciary /Subsection/
11. Other Subsections
12. Subordinated Security Agencies
13. Pending correspondence
14. Maps and overlays
15. Circulars from the Region Current Affairs Committee
16. Security Bulletins
17. Major campaigns and Political Struggles
18. Emulation Correspondence /concerning internal party matters within the Security Section/
19. Ca Mau Province (U1) Routine
20. Soc Trang Province (U2) Routine
21. Rach Gia Province (U3) Routine
22. Can Tho Province (U4) Routine
23. Tra Vinh Province (U5) Routine
24. Vinh Long Province (U6) Routine
25. Province Security Reporting (Monthly, Quarterly, Semi-annual, and Annual)

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Espionage Files

1. U.S. Espionage
2. National Police
3. Military Intelligence
4. Secret Service
5. Reconnaissance
6. Military Security
7. Political Action Team /i.e., Revolutionary Development Cadre/,
Special Forces, etc.
8. Foreign Spies

Khmer File

Political Party Files

1. Dai Viet
2. VNQDD ("Vietnamese Kuomintang")
3. Dan Xa
4. Other Parties and Organizations
5. Subsections Reporting /sic/

GVN Agencies File

(Pacification Teams, Civic Action Teams)

GVN Armed Forces File

Religious Files

1. Catholic Church
2. Cao Dai
3. Hoa Hao
4. Tinh Do Cu Si
5. Protestant Church
6. Buddhism
7. Inter-religion Organizations

NOTE: Adjustments were made in the translation for the sake of clarity.

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FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. President Ho Chi Minh (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi) p.63.
2. The first three-man cell formed in Vietnam in 1924. One of the functions of a three-man cell member is to keep watch on the other two.
3. Nguyen Khanh Hoan, "Meeting Ho Chi Minh in the Soviet Union," an account contained in Days with Ho Chi Minh, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1962, pp. 141-142. (Hereinafter referred to as Days).
4. Ibid.
5. Thirty Years of Struggle of the Party: Book One (Foreign Language Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960) p.18. (Hereinafter referred to as Thirty Years).
6. Jean Fort "Three Bottles of Champagne," a vignette written by a French Communist who knew Ho in Paris during the period. Days, p.61.
7. Thirty Years, p.37.
8. Donald Lancaster, The Emancipation of French Indochina (Oxford University Press, London, 1961) p.83.
9. Thirty Years, p.74.
10. Ibid. pp. 63-102.
11. Truong Chinh, The August Revolution (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1962) p.17.
12. Third National Congress of the Vietnam Workers (Lao Dong) Party Volume III, (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi) p.115.

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13. E.g., MACV Log #6-428, 9 August 1964, pp. 3-4; CMIC Report #US 05 090-67, a special report of Source #1345; IPW Report #0281-B, 13 August 1964; NIC Report #88/66.
14. MACV DEC Log #5-2333-67, Items 9 and 10.
15. Ibid., Item 8.

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17. MACV Translation Report #10-1663-66, p.2.
18. MACV IPW Report #0281-B, Annex 1, para. 11, 13 August 1964.
19. MACV Log #8-150-65, 1 September 1965.
20. MACV IPW Report #0281-B, 13 August 1964.
21. NIC Report #58/66.
22. CMIC Log #11-067-66, a Special Report of CMIC Source #1345.
23. CMIC Report #US 559-66/1330, a Special Report of Source #1330. It is interesting to note that infiltration Group B46, K48, and K49 all left at approximately the same time, while infiltration group "K3" left over a year earlier. This is not enough evidence to establish a sequential numbering pattern, but suggests that the numbers attached to security infiltration groups bears watching.
24. Captured infiltrators indicate that the Ha Dong school usually has 400 students attending classes simultaneously. E.g., MACV Log #6-428, 9 August 1964, p.3. Classes range from 6 weeks to one year in length.

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25. CMIC Report #US 094-67/1345.

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28.

his six years with the security apparatus he had neither seen nor heard of northern security personnel in the Delta. Neither had a Village level security official who was captured in GVN Dinh Tuong Province in early 1967.

29. MACV DEC Log #08-1504-66.

30. E.g., MACV DEC Log #503-1495-67 and 03-1582-67.

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32. MACV Translation Report #5-1505-66, pp. 3-7.

33. MACV DEC Log #06-0741-66.

34. MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66.

35. MACV DEC Log #09-2440-66.

36. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66. The Binh Dinh Province security section jail held 325 inmates in early 1966, about ten times the number ordinarily incarcerated in the Can Tho jail. A jail the size of Binh Dinh's would probably need at least a hundred administrators and guards.

37. E.g., MACV Translation Report #10-2353-66. See also Darlac Provincial Interrogation Center Report #256/3/67, 24 April 1967.

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38. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p.3.
39. MACV DEC Log #05-1604-66.
40. MACV DEC Log #'s 05-2957-67, 08-1216-67, 08-1216-66, and 03-2167-67. (See Footnote #346, Chapter VI, for the numbers and districts.)
41. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66, p.7. Unfortunately, the original document is unavailable.
42. MACV Translation Report #01-1320-67, pp. 6-7; MACV Translation Report #12-1768-66, p.4; MACV Translation Report #7-1091-66, p.5; MACV Translation Report #01-2152-67; MACV Translation Report #8-1438-66, p.4; MACV Translation Report #08-1295-66; MACV DEC Log #03-2167-67; MACV Translation Report #12-2899-66, and RAND Interview DT-135 (IV), p.32.
43. Based on figures obtained from the RAND Corporation, which keeps a statistical sample of defectors by occupation.
44. The dislike is not universal. A Village security official, who defected recently in VC My Tho Province, on being asked by a RAND interviewer what the weak and strong points of his section were, and how the people reacted to it, replied:

"I didn't notice any strong points... It only had difficulties which prevented it from performing its tasks, so all the members did was to organize drinking parties...The people didn't hate us, they only said we drank too much."
45. MACV J-2 Counter-Intelligence Estimate Republic of Vietnam, December 1966.
46. Ibid.
47. MACV DEC Log #02-2309-67.

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48. See MACV J-2's VC Political Infrastructure, CICV Research and Analysis Study 66-30, 27 May 1966, p.23.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

25X1A 49. Nam Bo, encompassing the southern half of South Vietnam, was divided into four parts: Eastern Nam Bo (now Region I), Central Nam Bo (now Region II), Western Nam Bo (now Region III) and the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Zone (now Region IV). The northern half of South Vietnam was called Trung Bo (Regions V and VI). (See map.) Recent documents occasionally use the old nomenclature.

50. [REDACTED] Interview DT-136 (IV), for an account of the Viet Minh security apparatus in Nam Bo.

51. CMIC Log #10-037-66, a Special Report from CMIC source number 1211.

52. CMIC Report US #559-66/1330.

53. MACV DEC Log #05-1171-66, containing a COSVN directive addressed to "C231", the codename for the MPS in Hanoi.

25X1X6 54. [REDACTED]
of 1966, the Allies captured a cache of the COSVN Security Section documents less than four miles from where he said the Section was located in late 1962.

55. MACV DEC Log #03-1557-67.

56. MACV DEC Log #03-1582-67.

57. MACV DEC Log #03-1495-67.

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58. MACV DEC Log #05-1209-66.
59. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.
60. MACV DEC Log #05-1220-67.
61. MACV DEC Log #09-2445-66.
62. MACV DEC Log #05-2374-67.
63. MACV DEC Log #01-2019-67. See also MACV DEC Log #05-1047-67.
64. MACV DEC Log #01-2624-67.
65. MACV DEC Log #05-1236-66.
66. MACV DEC Log #05-1171-66. See also MACV DEC Log #05-2374-67.
67. MACV DEC Log #02-2439-67. The Vietnamese phrase translated as "commando" is "Biet Kich." "Biet Kich" formations are any type of small units engaging in commando activities. The Viet Cong include among them Provincial Reconnaissance Units, small ranger or Special Forces teams, or any other units with a similar function.
68. MACV DEC Log #04-1201-67.
69. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.
70. MACV DEC Log #03-1544-67.
71. MACV DEC Log #07-1116-66.
72. MACV DEC Log #05-1540-66. See also DEC Log #6-1100-66, which suggests that "R" (usually the code classification of COSVN) held a security congress in late 1965, and DEC LOG #03-1557-67.
73. MACV DEC Log #05-1354-66.

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74. E.g., MACV DEC Log #03-1534-67. See also DEC Log #05-1352-66 concerning the establishment of liaison corridors with Regions I through IV.
75. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.
76. A COSVN security section directive was sent to "C231" for "report." MACV DEC Log #05-1171-66. "C231" is the codename for the MPS in Hanoi.
77. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1329-66 and 06-1330-66.
78. These are usually divided into Categories "A," "B," and "C," according to their degree of unreliability. See Chapter VI for a discussion of the categories.

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79. 

stated that the division sent a daily report of desertion to the COSVN Security Section. CMIC Report #259-66/1211.

80. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.
81. MACV DEC Log #05-1361-66.
82. MACV DEC Log #05-1168-66.
83. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.
84. Ibid.
85. MACV DEC Log #05-1233-66.
86. MACV DEC Log #06-1400-66.
87. MACV DEC Log #01-4414-66.
88. MACV DEC Log #03-1544-67 (Tay Ninh), 03-2342-67 (Binh Long).

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89. MACV Translation Report #05-1383-67 and MACV DEC Log #05-1396-67. See MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66 concerning the security section's one-time function of protecting foreign visitors.
90. E.g., MACV DEC Log #'s 03-1574-67 and 03-2009-67.
91. MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66. Compare with DEC Log #05-1218-66, which suggests an annual output of about 500 students.
92. MACV DEC Log #05-1178-66.
93. MACV DEC Log #05-1216-66.
94. An unpublished roster of security cadres for Cho Gao District in VC My Tho Province (GVN Dinh Tuong), dated 3 February 1966.
95. MACV DEC Log #05-1218-66.
96. MACV DEC Log #05-1166-66.
97. MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1220-66, 05-1178-66 and 05-1218-66.
98. MACV DEC Log #03-1557-67.
99. E.g., MACV DEC Log #03-1511-67.
100. See Footnote #145.
101. 500,000 and 36,599 riels were issued for the 1st and 3rd quarters, respectively, of 1965. MACV DEC Log #'s 03-1533-67 and 03-2367-67.
102. MACV DEC Log #03-1511-67.
103. Viet Cong documents indicate that they are convinced that DIA and FBI are also present in force in South Vietnam.
104. MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1150-66 and 05-1433-66.

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25X1A

105. [REDACTED]

106. Care should be made to differentiate between the Security Section bureaucracy, and the Security Section party organization. They are parallel, but different structures.
107. Documents have also given the cover names "Sau Hoang," "Tu Cop" and "Chin Nghia" to the chief of the Security Section.
108. E.g., MACV DEC Log #'s 03-1566-67, 05-1340-66, 05-1343-66.
109. MACV DEC Log #03-1586-67.
110. MACV DEC Log #'s 03-1583-67, 05-1150-67.
111. MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67.
112. MACV DEC Log #03-2562-67.
113. MACV Translation Report #05-1352-66, p. 2.
114. C.f. MACV Translation Report #03-1557-67, a twenty-four page translation of various financial records kept by the Security Section's finance component.
115. An estimate for 1965 expenditures (prepared in April) gauged that 3,709,890 riel and 9,943,148 piasters would be spent that year. Of these, 3,038,800 riel and 934,000 piasters were "Secret Funds." Ibid.
116. MACV DEC Log #05-1212-66 describes an audit (held at 6:30 in the morning) of the books of the accounting component of the internal security school. The books were in poor shape.
117. MACV DEC Log #05-1161-66.

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118. *MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.*
119. *A captured B1 correspondence cell document, entitled "The By-Laws of the Rental Library" may represent some sort of high point in Viet Cong paperwork. MACV DEC Log #05-1163-66.*
120. *MACV DEC Log #05-1156-66.*
121. *MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67 (all strengths as of early 1966).*
122. *MACV DEC Log #03-2562-67.*
123. *MACV DEC Log #03-2480-67.*
124. *MACV DEC Log #05-1352-66.*
125. *MACV Translation Report #03-2444-67, p.1.*
126. *MACV DEC Log #03-2562-67.*
127. *MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67.*
128. *MACV DEC Log #03-1495-67.*
129. *Ibid.*
130. *MACV Translation Report #05-1352-66, p.3.*
131. *MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1171-66 (Foreign Newsmen) and 05-1167-66 (pro-American Cambodians).*
132. *MACV DEC Log #05-1170-66.*
133. *MACV Translation Report #05-1352-66, p.4.*
134. *MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67.*
135. *MACV DEC Log #03-2562-67.*
136. *MACV DEC Log #05-1433-66.*
137. *E.g., MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1216-66 and 05-1234-66.*

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138. E.g., MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1520-67 and 03-2562-67.
139. Unfortunately, the document does not include detailed descriptions of courses' content; the names of most are available, however. (See para. 15 of this chapter).
140. MACV DEC Log #05-1224-66.
141. MACV DEC Log #05-1215-66.
142. MACV DEC Log #05-1212-66.
143. MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1222-66 and 03-2513-67.
144. MACV DEC Log #05-1218-66.
145. E.g., MACV DEC Log #05-1160-66.
146. MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67.
147. Ibid.
148. MACV Translation Report #05-1352-66, pp. 5-6.
149. MACV Translation Report #03-2342-67.
150. MACV Translation Reports #03-2355-67 and #03-2444-67.
151. MACV DEC Log #05-1150-67.
152. MACV DEC Log #05-1520-67.
153. MACV DEC Log #03-1534-67.
154. See MACV Translation Reports #03-2342-67, #03-2355-67, and #03-2444-67.
155. MACV DEC Log #05-1434-66.
156. MACV DEC Log #03-1520-67.
157. MACV DEC Log #03-2668-67.

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158. MACV DEC Log #03-2651-67, Item 1, concerning a member of the US Special Forces. Most American soldiers would be questioned by the VC Military Intelligence Units. The US Special Forces troops (as "commandos," or "Biet Kich") are among those types of soldiers over which the Viet Cong Security Service has jurisdiction.
159. MACV DEC Log #05-1075-67.
160. MACV DEC Log #03-2651-67, Item 2.
161. MACV Translation Report #03-1557-67, p.24.
162. See again MACV DEC Log #03-1511-67.
163. MACV Translation Report #03-2342-67, a document concerning the issuing of weapons to various Security Section members and clients--including "informers and spies in remote areas," around "Saigon-Cholon."
164. The following documents mention radio equipment held by the Section: MACV Translation Report #03-1557-67, p.6 (batteries), p.13 (batteries), p.14 (transmitters, receivers, batteries, battery chargers, transformers, and other signal equipment, worth a total of 508,000 piasters); MACV DEC Log #03-1539-67 (transmitters, rectifiers, converters, batteries, capacitors, receivers); MACV DEC Log #03-2444-67 (six radios with complete accessories and hand-cranked generators).
165. MACV DEC Log #03-1539-67.
166. MACV DEC Log #03-2349-67.
167. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66 (VC Rach Gia Province) and Translation Report #06-1169-66 (VC Soc Trang Province).
168. MACV DEC Log #04-2935-67; MACV DEC Log #04-2875-67.
169. MACV DEC Log #04-2935-67.

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170. MACV DEC Log #09-2445-66. See also MACV DEC Log #06-3035-67, which suggests regions have radio intercept and cryptanalysis facilities.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

171. Municipal areas with the highest population density as of 1965 - Inhabitants per hectare: Saigon (356); Athens (170); Tokyo (152); London (85); Philadelphia (58). Doxiadis Associates, Saigon Metropolitan Area. Document DOX-VNS-A1, for the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, 26 January 1965, Vol. 1, p. 68.

172. For a brief discussion of Saigon's population pressures, see David A. DePuy's "The Impact of Rural-Urban Migration on the Saigon Metropolitan Area," (Human Sciences Research, McLean, Virginia, February 1967).

173. Vietnamese Communist Security and Intelligence Organs in South Vietnam, 1951-1955. (Foreign Document Division Summary #2146, 27 April 1959), Chapter IV, "The Saigon-Cholon Public Security Service."

174. Ibid., pp. 31-35.

175. MACV DEC Log #01-1258-66, a document which lists the names (apparently true as well as cover) of several members of the Region IV Security Section in 1965.

176. E.g., MACV DEC Log #04-3025-67, Item 3, and MACV DEC Log #04-3039-67, Item 1.

177. See MACV Translation Report #01-3003-67 for a detailed breakdown of VC Region IV by subregion, area, and village. The listed jurisdictions are military and may not completely coincide with those of the Security Service.

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178. *Code designations as of December 1966. They are, of course, subject to change.*
179. *CMIC Report #US 577-67/1440.*
180. *The chief of the COSVN Security Section is reportedly a Lieutenant Colonel, as is the head of the Region IV Security Service. Since Region IV's security chief is only a Major, he is probably due for a promotion.*
181. *E.g., MACV DEC Log #04-2613-67, a detailed Region IV security directive, on a matter which COSVN specifically reserved to itself the final decision.*
182. *C.f. MACV DEC Log #03-2342-67.*
183. *MACV DEC Log #02-1087-66.*
184. *See Annex B for a list of documents having to do with the Espionage and City Security components of the Viet Cong Security Apparatus. Although it is by no means certain that the Region IV espionage apparatus conforms to the overall COSVN espionage subsection organization directive (MACV Translation Report #05-1220-67), the Region Service probably has many of the elements ordained by COSVN.*
185. *MACV Translation Report #03-2444-67.*
186. *MACV DEC Log #01-1460-66, a report of an interrogation carried out by the Region IV Security Section of an Allied agent who had insinuated himself into a Viet Cong intelligence network. The report was issued under a circular number "240/B7" which may indicate that "B7" was the cover designation of the Region interrogation facility in late 1965, the date of the document.*
187. *MACV DEC Log #06-3008-67.*

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188. E.g., MACV DEC Log #01-1334-67, a letter from Cu Chi Subregion Security Service to villages in its jurisdiction, with an info copy to the Region IV Security Section. See also MACV DEC Log #09-1204-66 and #09-1205-66.
189. E.g., MACV Translation Report #04-1165-66.
190. See MACV Translation Report #09-2761-66, and MACV Translation Report #01-1332-67.
191. MACV DEC Log #01-3346-67, Item 2.
192. MACV DEC Log #01-2129-67, which gists a notebook kept by a Vung security cadre.
193. CMIC Report #US 094-67/1345.
194. E.g., MACV Translation Report #09-2761-66; MACV Translation Report #04-1165-66; MACV Translation Report #01-2152-67, pp. 3-6; and MACV Translation Report #09-1204-66.
195. MACV DEC Log #04-3056-67, Item 1.
196. MACV DEC Log #04-2919-67.
197. MACV DEC Log #04-3056-67, Item 3.
198. MACV DEC Log #04-3093-67.
199. E.g., MACV DEC Log #04-3126-67 and #04-3039-67.
200. MACV DEC Log #04-3065-67. The Viet Cong Security Service makes a sharp distinction between two types of deserters. Those who defect to the Government the Service is prone to execute. Those who refrain from defecting but who, for example, go home, it tries to arrest and "reindoctrinate".

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FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

201. MACV Translation Report #10-1415-66, a Region V Security directive addressed to VC Daklak (GVN Darlac) Province, with a notation that a report copy should be sent to "R", the codename for COSVN.
202. E.g., MACV DEC Log #08-1504-66.
203. MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66.
204. MACV DEC Log #06-1092-66 (Quarterly), 06-1167-66 (Quarterly), 06-1216-66 (Monthly), and 06-1217-66 (Monthly).
205. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66.
206. MACV Translation Report #05-1352-66.
207. MACV DEC Log #06-1293-66.
208. MACV Translation Report #03-2444-67.
209. MACV DEC Log #05-1762-67. Vung Tau was VC Ba Ria Province in Region I. VC Ba Ria and VC Bien Hoa Provinces have been combined into Ba Bien.
210. MACV DEC Log #06-3035-67, a directive also sent to COSVN for "report." This suggests that it probably was written by the region and was therefore not a mere retransmittal of a higher echelon directive.
211. MACV Translation Report #05-1504-66.
212. MACV Translation Report #10-1415-66.
213. MACV Translation Report #05-1505-66.
214. MACV DEC Log #06-1217-66.
215. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66.

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216. *MACV Translation Report #12-1755-66.*
217. *MACV Translation Report #10-1415-66.*
218. *MACV DEC Log #06-1309-66 and MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66.*
219. *MACV DEC Log #06-1245-66.*
220. *MACV DEC Log #06-1309-66.*
221. 
222. *MACV DEC Log #04-3369-67, Item 3. The information was also sent to the COSVN Security Section.*
223. *Ibid., Item 4. Also addressed to the COSVN Security Section.*
224. *MACV DEC Log #06-1218-66.*
225. *MACV DEC Log #04-1761-67, Item 3.*
226. *MACV DEC Log #04-3369-67, Item 2. An interesting insight into the Viet Cong's views of the Catholic Church is contained in a report produced by the Region III Security Section. The report, noting that the Church was an "international organization" run from Rome, suggested that the Church confession "system" was employed to gather intelligence information. MACV DEC Log #06-1495-66. The Viet Cong are somewhat less suspicious of the Buddhists. See MACV DEC Log #06-1495-66.*
227. *MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66, p.7.*
228. *Ibid., p.8. See also MACV Translation Report #05-1505-66, pp. 11-14, which discusses the criteria for selecting students.*

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229. The COSVN Security Section also runs a "key cadre" course. Why the cadre are "key" is unknown; they may belong to espionage subsections.

230. [REDACTED]

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231. An average Security Section Region course (75 days) is shorter than the normal COSVN Security course (120 days), but longer than the average Provincial Security course (45 days).

232. [REDACTED]

25X1X6

233. CMIC Log #10-037-66, a Special Report from CMIC Source Number 1211.

234. See Chapter II, paras. 22-24 (COSVN); and Chapter V, para. 28 (Province).

235. All regional reports are typewritten. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1092-66.

236. MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66.

237. MACV DEC Log #03-1534-67.

238. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1309-66.

239. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66.

240. MACV DEC Log #03-1309-66.

241. MACV Translation Report #05-1504-66.

242. MACV Translation Report #05-1502-66.

243. MACV Translation Report #05-1220-67. See also a Region I document of 4 March 1966 in MACV Translation Report #05-1286-67.

244. MACV Translation Report #05-1504-66, p. 5.

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245. MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66.
246. MACV Translation Report #05-1502-66. See also MACV DEC Log #06-1309-66, which suggests that "B-2" component of the Region III security apparatus indulges in armed raids.
247. MACV Translation Report #05-1502-66.
248. MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66.
249. Ibid.
250. MACV DEC Log #06-3035-67.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

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251. Interview DT-136 (IV).
252. Ibid.
253. Vietnamese Communist Security and Intelligence Organs in South Vietnam, 1951-1955. Foreign Documents Division Summary No. 2146, 27 April 1959 pp. 1-15. (Originally Secret No Foreign Dissem, downgraded to Confidential) Nam Bo was COSVN's predecessor.
254. Ibid., p.20.
255. Ibid., p.24.

25X1A

256. Interview DT-136 (IV).
257. Understandably. In May 1960, a South Vietnamese Army officer showed an American intelligence official a roomful of packing cases which, the officer said, contained the complete files of the French Surete. The files, which included several hundred thousand names, among them thousands of Viet Minh, had been inactivated in 1956.

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258. The Lao Dong Party Security and Counterespionage Mechanism in South Vietnam, July 1963. (Originally Secret No Foreign Dissem, downgraded to Confidential).
259. Compare MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66 (Rach Gia), to MACV Translation Report Log #04-1026-66, p.5 (Kontum). See also MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.28 (Binh Dinh).
260. MACV Translation Report #05-1220-67.
261. E.g., Department of Defense Report #06 075 5486 67 (Situation Report of VC Phuoc Thanh Province Security Section).
262. E.g., MACV DEC Log #08-1214-66 (a series of detailed intelligence reports from Thua Thien Province Security Section, one of whose recipients was the province Current Affairs Committee).
263. MACV DEC Log #06-1352-66. In the spring of 1966, the ARVN 21st Division over-ran a nearly complete set of province security reports which had been sent to Region III. (They are translated in a series of CDEC Bulletins from late May to early July 1966. Capture Data: 14 May 1966, WQ378910).
264. MACV DEC Log #06-1497-66 (Tra Vinh Annual Security Report). and Log #06-1338-66 (Ca Mau Annual).
265. E.g., MACV DEC Log #08-1214-66.
266. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66. The report, whose author was obviously a well-trained and highly competent security official, indicates the degree to which the Vietnamese Communists consider the war a political, as well as military, struggle.
267. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1396-66 (Soc Trang Annual), #06-1315-66 (Rach Gia Monthly), #06-1094-66 (Vinh Long Monthly).

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268. MACV Translation Report #05-1540-66. The document's action addressees were the provincial Executive (Current Affairs) Committee, and the Region III Security Section. The information addressees were the Region III Executive (Current Affairs) Committee, COSVN, and the MPS. See also MACV DEC Log #04-3369-67, Items 3 and 4, which are ad hoc intelligence reports from VC Thu Dau Mot Province, addressed to Region I, with an info copy to COSVN.

269. MACV DEC Log #06-1293-66.

270. MACV Translation Report #04-1026-66, p.3.

271. Ibid. 25X1X6

272. 

273. MACV DEC Log #08-1206-66.

274. MACV DEC Log #08-1209-66.

275. MACV DEC Log #09-2487-66. Recent information indicates the VC have joined Ba Ria and Bien Hoa Provinces to form "Ba Bien" Province.

276. MACV Translation Report #12-1741-66.

277. 

278. E.g., MACV Translation Report #06-1169-66 (Ba Xuyen).

279. MACV DEC Log #08-1213-66.

280. MACV Translation Report #5-1540-66 and MACV Translation Report #08-1171-66.

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281. [REDACTED]

282. See MACV Translation Report #04-1026-66 (Kontum), MACV DEC Log #08-1216-66 (Thua Thien), and MACV Translation Report #08-1171-66, p.11 (Can Tho).

283. MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66 (Rach Gia).

284. [REDACTED] 25X1X6

285. MACV DEC Log #08-1216-66.

286. [REDACTED] 25X1X6

287. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, pp. 30-32.

288. MACV DEC Log #08-1215-66.

289. MACV DEC Log #08-1212-66.

290. MACV DEC Log #09-2497-66.

291. MACV DEC Log #05-3027-67, Item 2. The information was also passed to the deserter's home district and home village. See also MACV DEC Log #05-2400-67.

292. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.25.

293. MACV Translation Report #08-1216-66, pp. 3-4.

294. A document of 1 June 1965 describes the Thua Thien Security Section as having seven subsections: Admin (B1), "Support for Political Activity" (B2), Espionage (B3), Internal Security (B4), Law Enforcement (B5), People's Court (B6), and Prison (B7). The Thua Thien Security Section may be atypical because of the presence in Thua Thien of the city of Hue, itself an anomaly in South Vietnam. MACV Translation Report #11-0709A-65, p.9.

295. MACV Translation Report #06-1169-66, p.10.

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296. Rach Gia Province's Security Section admin staff consisted of a chief, a cryptographer, a "base" cadre, a finance cadre, three typists and a printer, five security guards (including two bodyguards), four couriers, four medics, a training cadre (with eight guards), and a "worksit" (presumably for growing food) with seven workers. MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66. See [redacted]

25X1X6

297. MACV Translation Report #06-1169-66, p.9.

298. MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66 (13 men: Ba Xuyen, January 1966); MACV DEC Log #06-1315-66 (14 men: Rach Gia, February 1966); MACV DEC Log #06-0741-66 (24 men: Can Tho, January 1966); and MACV DEC Log #05-1505-66 (22-33 men: Draft Plan for Organization of MR III, January 1966).

299. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.35, a translation of a Binh Dinh Province report which urges "cooperation between B2 and B3 in the investigation of enemy personnel targets active in enemy-controlled and liberated (i.e., Viet Cong) areas."

300. Ibid., p.30.

301. MACV DEC Log #08-1681-66.

302. MACV Translation Report #12-1741-66.

303. See MACV DEC Log "'s 08-1212-66 and 08-1215-66 for examples of B2 circulars.

304. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.29.

305. Can Tho Security Rallier.

306. See Viet Cong Political Infrastructure, CICV Research and Analysis Study 66-30, 21 May 66, Annex C, for a chart depicting the various agencies of a provincial bureaucracy.

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307. *E.g., Department of Defense Intelligence Information Report 6 075 5486 66, 5 March 1967, pp. 2-3.*
308. *MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.31.*
309. *MACV Translation Report #10-2353-66 and MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, pp. 15 and 36.*
310. *MACV Translation Report #06-1169-66, p.9.*
311. *MACV DEC Log #'s 05-1220-67 and 06-1282-66 note the presence of an "A4" component. The former document, a COSVN directive of mid-1964, calls "A4" an "Enemy Activity" Element. A 1966 COSVN Security document (MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p.4) and a region-level security directive of March 1966 (MACV DEC Log #05-1286-67) fail to mention an "A4" component. It may have been abolished.*
312. *MACV Translation Report #12-2217-66.*
313. *E.g., MACV Dec Log #08-1214-66.*
314. *MACV Translation Report #04-1026-66. See also MACV DEC Log #08-1216-66.*

[REDACTED] 25X1A2g

316. *MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.29.*

317. *Ibid., p.30.*

[REDACTED] 25X1A2g

319. *Ibid., see also MACV Translation Report #11-7098-65 (concerning Thua Thien and Hue).*
320. *MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p.4.*
321. *MACV DEC Log #08-1216-66 and MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.30.*

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322. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.27.

323. MACV DEC Log #06-1281-66 (five men), MACV DEC Log #06-1169-66 (three men), MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67 (six to twelve men).

324. [REDACTED] 25X1X6

325. MACV Translation Report #04-1241-66. The document added that a commo-liaison system is "also needed to maintain a constant watch over the secret personnel in order to prevent them from being enticed by city frivolities and orgies."

326. Obviously no Viet Cong police wear uniforms. Were the Viet Cong to triumph, however, members of the Legal Affairs Subsection would probably don uniforms, like their counterparts in the north.

327. MACV #06-1282-66 (Rach Gia: 47 members); MACV #06-1169-66 (Soc Trang: 49 members); MACV #06-0741-66 (Can Tho: 39 members). All strengths as of early 1966.

328. E.g., MACV Translation Report #09-2485-66, an interrogation report, issued as circular, of an ARVN lieutenant belonging to a Special Intelligence detachment.

329. [REDACTED] 25X1X6

330. MACV Translation Report #08-1216-66, pp. 5-6.

331. E.g., MACV DEC Log #06-1282-66 and 05-1505-66.

332. [REDACTED] 25X1X6

333. On rare occasions, Viet Cong Military Proselyting detention camps send prisoners to Security Service interrogation facilities. Of 5,753 ARVN POW's captured in Region V in 1965, only sixteen were turned over to Security Sections. MACV DEC Log #04-1707-67, Item 3.

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25X1X6

334. [REDACTED]

335. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.13. The district jails held another 777 prisoners.

336. MACV Translation Report #05-1504-66, p.2. The translation, entitled "The Guarding and Close Surveillance of Prisoners," gives a detailed account of troubles the Viet Cong have encountered in running jails in VC Region III. See also MACV Translation Report #08-1213-66.

337. MACV DEC Log #08-1208-66 and MACV Translation Report #08-1213-66.

338. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.14.

339. [REDACTED]

25X1X6

340. Ibid.

341. E.g., MACV Translation Report #06-1169-66 (Soc Trang: four). [REDACTED] said the provincial Legal Affairs section had twelve public order police.

25X1X6

342. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, pp. 14 and 34.

343. [REDACTED] all

25X1X6

court officials except the defense counsel are Party members. The defense counsel is a member of the Front. The defector, who attended eight such trials, stated that he had never heard a defense counsel say anything.

344. MACV Translation Report #06-1144-66, p.34.

345. Ibid., p.13.

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FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

346. Twenty-two men in an unidentified district in Tay Ninh, April 1967, MACV DEC Log #05-2957-67. At least twenty men in Tuy Hoa II District in Phu Yen, June 1966, MACV DEC Log #04-2160-67. Eighteen men in Huong Tuy District in Thua Thien, June 1965, MACV Translation Report #08-1216-66. Seventeen men in Phu Quoc District in Rach Gia, December 1966, MACV DEC Log #03-2167-67. Fifty men in Hoai Nhon District in Binh Dinh, December 1965, MACV DEC Log #05-1604-66. See also MACV Translation Report #05-1505-66, a Region III directive which called for a district complement of from 26 to 34 men.

347. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67.

348. E.g., MACV Translation Report #08-1438-66, MACV Translation Report #07-1091-66, and MACV DEC Log #12-1768-66.

349. The frequency of the courier runs and visits by district cadres to province varies, of course, depending on how close the province headquarters is.

350. MACV Translation Report #09-2363-66. "If they resist, do not hesitate to eliminate them," the circular added.

351. MACV DEC Log #04-1414-66.

352. MACV DEC Log #06-1146-66.

353. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p. 4.

354. Ibid., p. 3.

355. Thua Thien Province appears to be an exception. In 1966 Thua Thien took over the administration of its districts' jails. MACV DEC Log #08-1213-66.

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356. A typical district bureaucracy, in Tay Ninh Province, employed 111 people, of whom 22 belonged to the Security Section. MACV DEC LOG #05-2987-67.

357. MACV Translation Report #08-1438-66, pp. 8-9.

358. MACV DEC Log #08-1249-66.

359. Ibid.

360. E.g., MACV DEC Log #08-1279-66.

361. The Huong Tuy District report which indicated there were 19 executions at district level during 1965 stated that 45 additional captives were "sentenced to death" in villages of the district. MACV Translation Report #08-1438-66, p.11. See also MACV DEC Log #06-2446-67, concerning village executions in Thua Thien during 1966.

362. E.g., MACV DEC Log #08-1502-66.

363. MACV Translation Report #07-1091-66 (5 days), and MACV DEC Log #10-1816-66, Item 4 (10 days).

364. MACV Translation Report #07-1091-66, p.5.

365. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67.

366. 

25X1X6

367. E.g., eleven men attached to the prison in Phu Quoc District, VC Rach Gia Province, MACV #03-2167-67, and 12-16 men (including a chief, three interrogators, and 8-12 guards) in Ke Sach District, VC Can Tho Province, 

25X1X6

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368. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p.7. The translation uses the word "township", instead of "village". Both mean the same thing.

369. E.g., MACV Translation Report #10-1832-66 (a monthly report of a village in Phu My District, Binh Dinh Province), MACV Translation Report #01-2152-67 (a detailed monthly village security report), and MACV Translation Report #08-1295-65 (a compendium of several village reports).

370. MACV Translation Report #08-1295-65, p.1.

371. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67, p.3.

372. MACV DEC Log #04-1416-66.

25X1A

373. From [redacted] interview conducted in Dinh Tuong Province in April 1967. Interview number unavailable. (Interview herein cited as [redacted] April 1967). 25X1A

374. MACV DEC Log #06-1338-66.

375. See MACV Translation Report #07-0239-65, pp. 2-3.

376. MACV Translation Report #08-1295-66, p.12.

377. MACV Translation Report #08-0404-65. The directive also gave a detailed description of village and hamlet pass procedures.

25X1A

378. [redacted] Interview DT-135 (I), Part One, p.32. (In Dinh Tuong Province).

25X1A

379. [redacted] April, 1967, also in Dinh Tuong.

380. MACV Translation Report #08-1438-68, p.11.

381. BMTR-30, 641/66, a VC document obtained in Darlac Province.

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382. In one district in one month, 1400 people were reported to have attended village-level security classes. MACV Translation Report #10-1832-66, p.3. See also MACV Translation Report #07-1091-66, p.6. A Region III report claimed that 2,372,048 had attended indoctrination sessions within the region, including "64,486 people in areas controlled by the government." Probably many of the "people" attended more than one meeting. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66, p.3.

25X1A2g

384. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67.

385. MACV DEC Log #06-2386-67, Item 6. The village in question, and its parent district, appear to be particularly bloodthirsty. Their reports contain frequent accounts of killings, kidnapping, and executions. See the other items in referenced document and in MACV DEC Log #06-2309-67, MACV DEC Log #06-2446-67 for the tales of carnage.

386. During 1965 Region III gave training courses for 55 village security section chiefs. MACV Translation Report #06-1297-66, p.8.

387. MACV Translation Report #01-2624-67.

388. See MACV J-2's VC Political Infrastructure CICV Research and Analysis Study 66-30, 21 May 1966, pp. 31-34, and MACV Translation Report #06-1483-66 for descriptions of a Village Autonomous Administrative Committee.

25X1A
389. [REDACTED] Interview DT-135 (I), Part One, pp. 32-33.

390. [REDACTED] April 1967.

391. Ibid.

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Administrative Divisions in South Vietnam

